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NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

Inside
'50s
Rock Movie
Posters

The Pretenders come out of the dark Photograph: Pennie Smith

Pretenders

Rock Cinema

NME's Rock Movie month
starts here

NME CHARTS

Week ending January 26, 1980

UK SINGLES

This Week	Last			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(1)	**Brass In Pocket**	Pretenders (Real)	3	1
2	(4)	**Please Don't Go**	K C & The Sunshine Band (TK)	3	2
3	(5)	**With You I'm Born Again**	Billy Preston/Syreeta (Motown)	3	3
4	(7)	**My Girl**	Madness (Stiff)	3	4
5	(15)	**I'm In The Mood For Dancing**	The Nolans (Epic)	2	5
6	(17)	**Green Onions**	Booker T & The MG's (Atlantic)	2	6
7	(2)	**Another Brick In The Wall**	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	6	1
8	(6)	**Tears Of A Clown**	Beat (Two Tone)	4	6
9	(3)	**I Have A Dream**	Abba (Epic)	5	2
10	(18)	**Better Love Next Time**	Dr Hook (Capitol)	3	10
11	(16)	**Babe**	Styx (A & M)	2	11
12	(13)	**London Calling**	Clash (CBS)	4	12
13	(8)	**Day Trip To Bangor**	Fiddlers Dram (Dingles)	5	3
14	(21)	**Spacer**	Sheila B Devotion (Carrere)	2	14
15	(11)	**Is It Love You're After**	Rose Royce (Whitfield)	7	11
16	(—)	**It's Different For Girls**	Joe Jackson (A & M)	1	16
17	(9)	**I Only Want To Be With You**	Tourists (Logo)	7	3
18	(28)	**I Wanna Hold Your Hand**	Dollar (Carrere)	2	18
19	(10)	**Rappers Delight**	Sugar Hill Gang (Sugarhill)	6	2
20	(—)	**I Hear You Now**	Jon & Vangelis (Polydor)	1	20
21	(—)	**Jazz Carnival**	Azymuth (Milestone)	1	21
22	(24)	**Spirits Having Flown**	Bee Gees (RSO)	3	22
23	(—)	**Working For The Yankee Dollar**	Skids (Virgin)	1	23
24	(22)	**My Feet Keep Dancing**	Chic (Atlantic)	5	18
25	(14)	**John I'm Only Dancing (Again)**	David Bowie (RCA)	4	10
26	(—)	**Escape**	Rupert Holmes (Infinity)	1	26
27	(—)	**7 Teen**	Regents (Rialto)	1	27
28	(—)	**I've Got To Love Somebody**	Sister Sledge (Atlantic)	1	28
29	(—)	**Too Hot**	Kool & The Gang (Mercury)	1	29
30	(25)	**We Got The Funk**	Positive Force (Sugarhill)	2	25

UP AND COMING:

I Wanna Be Your Lover — Prince (Warner Bros).
Mama's Boy — Suzi Quatro (RAK).
Young Blood — UFO (Chrysalis).
Someone's Looking At You — Boomtown Rats (Ensign).
Buzz Buzz A Diddle It — Matchbox (Magnet).
Strange Little Girl — Sad Cafe (RCA).

UK ALBUMS

This Week	Last			Weeks in chart	Highest position
1	(2)	**Regatta De Blanc**	Police (A&M)	14	1
2	(1)	**Abba's Greatest Hits Vol 2**	Abba (Epic)	10	1
3	(—)	**Pretenders**	Pretenders (Real)	1	3
4	(8)	**One Step Beyond**	Madness (Stiff)	10	4
5	(9)	**Eat To The Beat**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	15	2
6	(5)	**The Wall**	Pink Floyd (Harvest)	6	4
7	(7)	**Bee Gees Greatest Hits**	(RSO)	8	7
8	(3)	**Greatest Hits**	Rod Stewart (Riva)	9	1
9	(4)	**20 Hottest Hits**	Hot Chocolate (Rak)	4	4
10	(16)	**The Specials**	Specials (Two Tone)	11	8
11	(13)	**Video Stars**	Various (K-Tel)	2	11
12	(6)	**Off The Wall**	Michael Jackson (Epic)	16	3
13	(17)	**The Best Of Chic**	(Atlantic)	2	13
14	(15)	**London Calling**	Clash (CBS)	3	14
15	(10)	**20 Golden Greats**	Diana Ross (Motown)	8	2
16	(12)	**ELO's Greatest Hits**	Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	6	8
17	(—)	**No Place To Run**	UFO (Chrysalis)	1	17
18	(—)	**Sometimes You Win**	Dr Hook (Capitol)	6	14
19	(11)	**Love Songs**	Elvis Presley (K-Tel)	7	3
20	(19)	**Slim Whitman's 20 Great Love Songs**	(United Artists)	2	19
21	(—)	**Semi Detached Suburban**	Manfred Mann (EMI)	1	21
22	(24)	**Peace In The Valley**	Various (Ronco)	4	7
23	(29)	**Fawlty Towers**	Soundtrack (BBC)	3	19
24	(18)	**Tusk**	Fleetwood Mac (Warner Bros)	12	2
25	(14)	**Outlandos D'amour**	Police (A&M)	32	7
26	(27)	**Setting Sons**	Jam (Polydor)	7	6
27	(22)	**Parallel Lines**	Blondie (Chrysalis)	58	1
28	(—)	**The Fine Art Of Surfacing**	Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	5	7
29	(—)	**Greatest Hits**	10cc (Mercury)	12	5
30	(—)	**Sid Sings**	Sid Vicious (Virgin)	2	25

UP AND COMING:

End Of The Century — Ramones (Sire).
September Morn — Neil Diamond (CBS).
The Summit — Various Artists (K-Tel).
Flex — Lene Lovich (Stiff).
I'm The Man — Joe Jackson (A & M).
Nolans — The Nolans (Epic).

US SINGLES

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	**Rock With You**	Michael Jackson
2	(2)	**Do That To Me One More Time**	The Captain & Tennille
3	(4)	**Coward Of The County**	Kenny Rogers
4	(7)	**Cruisin'**	Smokey Robinson
5	(3)	**Escape**	Rupert Holmes
6	(5)	**Ladies' Night**	Kool & The Gang
7	(6)	**We Don't Talk Anymore**	Cliff Richard
8	(10)	**Don't Do Me Like That**	Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers
9	(14)	**Sara**	Fleetwood Mac
10	(12)	**This Is It**	Kenny Loggins
11	(13)	**The Long Run**	Eagles
12	(8)	**Please Don't Go**	KC & The Sunshine Band
13	(15)	**I Wanna Be Your Lover**	Prince
14	(22)	**Crazy Little Thing Called Love**	Queen
15	(17)	**Deja Vu**	Dionne Warwick
16	(19)	**Yes I'm Ready**	Teri DeSario/D C
17	(18)	**Don't Let Go**	Isaac Hayes
18	(9)	**Jane**	Jefferson Starship
19	(20)	**Third Time Lucky**	Foghat
20	(25)	**Romeo's Tune**	Steve Forbert
21	(11)	**Send One Your Love**	Stevie Wonder
22	(24)	**Do You Love What You Feel**	Rufus And Chaka Khan
23	(27)	**Why Me**	Styx
24	(26)	**Wait For Me**	Daryl Hall & John Oates
25	(—)	**Longer**	Dan Fogelberg
26	(21)	**Better Love Next Time**	Dr Hook
27	(30)	**Forever Mine**	The O'Jays
28	(16)	**Cool Change**	Little River Band
29	(23)	**Head Games**	Foreigner
30	(—)	**An American Dream**	The Dirt Band

US ALBUMS

This Week	Last		
1	(2)	**The Wall**	Pink Floyd
2	(1)	**The Long Run**	Eagles
3	(3)	**On The Radio Greatest Hits**	Donna Summer
4	(4)	**Cornerstone**	Styx
5	(6)	**Damn The Torpedoes**	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
6	(8)	**Kenny**	Kenny Rogers
7	(5)	**Bee Gees' Greatest Hits**	Bee Gees
8	(10)	**Off The Wall**	Michael Jackson
9	(9)	**Tusk**	Fleetwood Mac
10	(11)	**Phoenix**	Dan Fogelberg
11	(7)	**In Through The Out Door**	Led Zeppelin
12	(13)	**Wet**	Barbra Streisand
13	(14)	**Freedom At Point Zero**	Jefferson Starship
14	(17)	**No Nukes: The Muse Concerts For A Non-Nuclear Future**	Various Artists
15	(15)	**Live Rust**	Neil Young & Crazy Horse
16	(19)	**Gold & Platinum**	Lynyrd Skynyrd
17	(12)	**Journey Through The Secret Life Of Plants**	Stevie Wonder
18	(16)	**Night In The Ruts**	Aerosmith
19	(25)	**The Rose**	Original Soundtrack
20	(21)	**Keep The Fire**	Kenny Loggins
21	(18)	**Midnight Magic**	Commodores
22	(—)	**September Morn**	Neil Diamond
23	(22)	**Masterjam**	Rufus & Chaka
24	(20)	**Head Games**	Foreigner
25	(23)	**Rise**	Herb Alpert
26	(26)	**Breakfast In America**	Supertramp
27	(28)	**Dequello**	ZZ Top
28	(30)	**Gambler**	Kenny Rogers
29	(24)	**Down On The Farm**	Little Feat
30	(—)	**ELO's Greatest Hits**	Electric Light Orchestra

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

5 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 14, 1975

1 Streets Of London — Ralph McTell (Reprise)
2 Down Down — Status Quo (Vertigo)
3 Never Can Say Goodbye — Gloria Gaynor (MGM)
4 The Bump — Kenny (Rak)
5 Ms. Grace — Tymes (RCA)
6 I Can Help — Billy Swan (Monument)
7 Get Dancing — Disco Tex & The Sex-O-Lettes (Chelsea)
8 Are You Ready To Rock — Wizzard (Warner Bros)
9 Juke Box Jive — Rubettes (Polydor)
10 Stardust — David Essex (CBS)

10 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 14, 1970

1 Two Little Boys — Rolf Harris (Columbia)
2 Tracy — Cuff Links (MCA)
3 Melting Pot — Blue Mink (Philips)
4 All I Have To Do Is Dream — Bobbie Gentry & Glen Campbell (Capitol)
5 Ruby Don't Take Your Love To Town — Kenny Rogers & The First Edition (Reprise)
6 Suspicious Minds — Elvis Presley (RCA)
7 Sugar Sugar — Archies (RCA)
8 Good Old Rock'n'Roll — Dave Clark Five (Columbia)
9 Reflections Of My Life — Marmalade (Decca)
10 Yester-Me, Yester-You, Yesterday — Stevie Wonder (Tamla Motown)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending January 15, 1965

1 Yeh Yeh — Georgie Fame & The Blue Flames (Columbia)
2 I Feel Fine — Beatles (Parlophone)
3 Go Now — Moody Blues (Decca)
4 Girl Don't Come — Sandie Shaw (Pye)
5 Terry — Twinkle (Decca)
6 Somewhere — P. J. Proby (Liberty)
7 Downtown — Petula Clark (Pye)
8 Ferry Cross The Mersey — Gerry & The Pacemakers (Columbia)
9 Walk Tall — Val Doonican (Decca)
10 I Could Easily Fall — Cliff Richard (Columbia)

*The big beats today's pop kids go for. Above: working **extremely** hard for the Yankee dollar, Richard Jobson strains for the Moscow Olympics. Below: The Madness Sisters — Linda (20), Maureen (24), Bernadette (18), Suggsy (5) and Mike (size 12) — rehearse their hit single 'I'm In The Mood For Dancing'. And who would not be in the mood for dancing with any one of the girls? (it says here)*

REGGAE

*Denotes 12"

(1) **Fort Augustus** — Jr Delgado (Taxi)
(2) **Poor And Clean** — Gregory Isaacs (African Museum)*
(3) **If Jah Should Come Now** — Rod Taylor (Little Luke)*
(4) **Homeward Bound** — Creation Steppers (Nationwide)*
(5) **Love And Devotion** — Jimmy Riley (Taxi)
(6) **Wan Be No General** — Dennis Brown (DEB)
(7) **Rockers Blood** — Augustus Pablo (Rockers)
(8) **Different Style** — Nigger Kojak (Joe Gibbs)
(9) **Hotel Jee** — Madoo/Gen Echo (Techniques)*
(10) **Baffling Smoke Signal/Captive** — Lee Perry (Black Art)*

Chart supplied by: Daddy Kool, 94 Dean Street, London W1.

DISCO

*denotes import. All 12".

(1) **And The Beat Goes On** — Whispers (Solar)
(2) **We've Got The Groove** — Players Association (Vanguard)
(3) **Loosen Up** — Frequency (Hard Boiled)*
(4) **Rhythm Talk** — Jocko (Philadelphia International)*
(5) **Shake It** — Brass Construction (United Artists)
(6) **Relight My Fire** — Dan Hartman (Blue Sky)
(7) **Lookin' Good** — Eddie Cheba (Tree Line)*
(8) **Four Hot Imports** — Various Artists (EP) (Casablanca)
(9) **Rock It** — Deborah Washington (Ariola)
(10) **Bodysnatching** — U S Of A (Carrere)

Chart supplied by: Quicksilver Soul Source, 36 Hanway Street, London W1

INDIES

(1) **Day Trip To Bangor** — Fiddlers Dram (Dingles)
(2) **Sheep Farming In Barnet** — Toyah (Safari)
(3) **Where's Captain Kirk** — Athletico Spizz 80 (Rough Trade)
(4) **White Mice** — Modettes (Rough Trade)
(5) **Mind You Own Business** — Delta 5 (Rough Trade)
(6) **Opening Up** — Circles (Graduate)
(7) **Suspect Device** — Stiff Little Fingers (Rough Trade)
(8) **Soon You'll Be Gone** — Jo Jo Zepp & The Falcons (Rockburgh)
(9) **We Are All Prostitutes** — Pop Group (Rough Trade)
(10) **Nuclear Waste** — Radio Actors (Charlie)

CHART SUPPLIED BY: SPARTAN RECORDS, London Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 7HQ

NEWS

EDITED BY
DEREK JOHNSON

MOTOWN'S 20th ANNIVERSARY

Preston & Syreeta due, Diana in April

BILLY PRESTON & SYREETA, whose duet 'With You I'm Born Again' is currently hitting the high spots in the singles chart, are due in Britain for concert appearances "within six weeks" — according to Motown's London office. A tour is being set up for Diana Ross in April, and Stevie Wonder's long-awaited visit will definitely take place later this year. These are some of the highlights in a year of intensive Motown activity in Britain, to celebrate the label's 20th anniversary.

A spokesman said that a number of other acts will be over here during the course of the year, and there are plans for a Motown package tour in the autumn. Special album releases, both new and compilation, are also being prepared.

WONDER COMING —GAYE DELAYED

Marvin Gaye was to have spearheaded the Motown invasion, with a tour starting last weekend, and including two major London concerts this Friday and Saturday. But his visit was postponed at short notice, his doctors certifying that he is mentally and physically exhausted, as the result of a domestic crisis — his second wife has left him. Promoter Jeff Kruger stresses that all Gaye's shows are being re-arranged for about six weeks hence, when existing tickets will still be valid, though cash refunds may be obtained if desired.

DEXY'S RUNNERS IN A MARATHON

DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS begin the first part of their massive 'Straight To The Heart' tour this weekend, after a warm-up at Aylesbury last Saturday. The first leg comprises 26 dates, and the second part of the schedule — still being finalised — is expected to be of similar duration. They'll be featuring their current single 'Dance Stance', released on their own Dexy's label through EMI, and the support act on all gigs is The Black Arabs.

The date sheet so far is London Camden Music Machine (tomorrow, Friday), Edinburgh Tiffany's (January 28), Perth City Hall (29), Glasgow Technical College (30), Aberdeen Fusion (31), Fife St Andrew's University (February 1), Dundee University (2), Aberystwyth University (4), Shrewsbury Music Hall (5), Wolverhampton Polytechnic (6), Canterbury Kent University (7), Stafford North Staffs Polytechnic (8), Huddersfield Polytechnic (9), Norwich East Anglia Univesity (10), Newcastle-under-Lyme Tiffany's (11), Nuneaton 77 Club (12), Sheffield Polytechnic (13), Coventry Warwick University (14), Kidderminster Town Hall (15), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (16), Swansea Circles (18), Cardiff Top Rank (19), Bristol Romeo & Juliet (20), Penzance The Garden (21), Bath University (22) and Manchester Polytechnic (23).

NEW GUITARIST READY FOR WORLD TOUR

Lizzy decide: it's Snowy

THIN LIZZY have at last confirmed Snowy White as their permanent new lead guitarist, after months of speculation following the departure of Gary Moore. It was only this week that he completed all his prior commitments, except for a series of American dates with Pink Floyd, with whom he has worked as a session musician for the past two years.

Lizzy are now recording in London for a new album, due out in May, and White is co-writing some of the material with various other members of the band. Meanwhile, Phil Lynott has now finished work on his own solo album 'Solo In Soho', and it's set for mid-March release by Phonogram.

The band start rehearsing in March for their world tour, which opens with an extensive series of dates in Ireland, followed by a visit to Scandinavia. As reported, the British leg of the tour will occupy most of May — and in the summer they'll be visiting the States, Canada, Australia and Japan.

NEWS WAVES

The Chords on the road, Petty tour curtailment

THE CHORDS, whose second single 'Maybe Tomorrow' is issued by Polydor this weekend, promote it by way of a 13-date tour next month. The play Cambridge Corn Exchange with 999 (February 1), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (2), Huddersfield Coach House (3), Preston Polytechnic (4), Manchester Polytechnic (5), London Marquee (7 and 8), Cardiff Wales Polytechnic (11), Sheffield Limit (12), Nuneaton 77 Club (13), Isle of Sheppey Island Hotel (14), Derby Lonsdale College (15) and Bournemouth Dorset Institute (16). They then go into the studios to record their debut album with producer Andy Arthurs — it's planned for early spring release.

CLASSIX NOUVEAUX have acquired Gary Steadman, previously with Eater and Scrambled Ego, as their new guitarist. He replaces original member Jak Airport, formerly of X-Ray Spex, who has left to pursue a solo career. The other ex-Spex man, drummer B. P. Hurding, remains in Classix — along with Sal Solo and Mik Sweeney.

THE CROOKS, whose signing with the Blueprint label was announced last week, have their single 'All The Time In The World' issued on February 15. They preview it with London gigs at Crystal Palace Hotel (tomorrow, Friday), Marquee Club (Saturday), Trent Park Middlesex Polytechnic (February 2), Fulham Greyhound (15) and Kensington Nashville (19). Their debut album, produced by former Advertising member Simon Boswell, will be released in March to coincide with a headline tour.

TOM PETTY & The Heartbreakers will probably be forced to shorten their UK tour, due to open on February 22, as Petty is having his tonsils out early next month and won't be able to overtax his voice. He has been having throat trouble for some time, and doctors have recommended the operation as soon as possible. It seems likely that the band's concerts will now be restricted to London, Manchester and Birmingham, plus BBC-2's *Rock Goes To College* — but details of any re-arrangements will be announced officially next week.

THE PRETENDERS' debut album, with their name as its title, went Gold last Friday morning — exactly one week after its release date.

IGGY POP has added Aylesbury Friars on February 2 to his British tour, and this now becomes his opening date. But he has cancelled Bournemouth Stateside Centre on February 11.

B.B. KING RETURNS

B.B. KING headlines a short British concert series in early April, which — apart from his guest spots in the Capital Jazz Festival last summer — are his first shows here in his own right since October, 1978. Supported by his regular backing band, now augmented by a brass section, he'll be performing for the entire evening — with no opening act. He plays Manchester Free Trade Hall (April 2), Slough Fulcrum Centre (3) and London Hammersmith Odeon (5 and 6). Tickets are on sale now — at Hammersmith they are priced £4.50, £3.50 and £2.50.

Big smash for Eric?

WRECKLESS ERIC is playing a series of dates next month, coinciding with the February 1 release by Stiff Records of his new single 'A Pop Song', followed two weeks later by his album 'Big Smash'.

Gigs so far set are at Uxbridge Brunel University (February 1), London Marquee (4), Sheffield Limit Club (5), Norwich East Anglia University (6), Leicester Polytechnic (8), Liverpool Eric's (9), Leeds Fan Club (10) and Belfast Queen's University (14).

As a bonus, Eric's new album will include a free copy of his compilation LP 'The Whole Wide World', previously only available on U.S. import. And the first 10,000 copies sell at only £3.99, before it reverts to the regular price of £4.99.

BUZZARDS SWOOP

THE BUZZARDS (erstwhile Leyton Buzzards) have now re-grouped after disbanding in December. The split came as something of a surprise, following the qualified success of their album 'Jellied Eels To Record Deals' and single 'Saturday Night Beneath The Plastic Palm Trees', both released by Chrysalis in September. But they're now back again, retaining three original members — Geoff Deane (lead singer and writer), David Jaimes (bass) and Vernon Austin (lead guitar) — while Tony Gainsborough replaces Kevin Steptoe on drums, and former Cockney Rebel keyboards man Milton Reame-James augments the band to quintet size. They'll be playing a lengthy series of dates in the late winter and early spring, starting at London Canning Town Bridge House on February 23.

Spizz energises Athletico

ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80 have set their first series of gigs since changing their name from Spizz Energi. They are High Wycombe Nags Head (tonight, Thursday), Kidderminster College of Further Education (Friday), London Kensington Nashville (Saturday), London West Hampstead Moonlight Club (January 30), London Fulham Greyhound (February 1), Liverpool Eric's (2, two shows) and London Marquee (20). They also support The Clash at Birmingham Top Rank on February 6. These are the first dates to feature the band's new drummer C. P. Snare, the replacement for Hero Shima, who's decided to resume his studies at art college. Future Spizz plans include a lengthy European tour with Rough Trade stablemates The Mo-dettes in March and April.

Clash discover two new London venues

THE CLASH, in keeping with their declared policy of playing "interesting and unusual places", have added two more London dates to their current tour — both at venues new to rock. They are Balham Liberty Cinema (February 22) and Mile End Liberty Cinema (23) — tickets £3, £2.50 and £2. Both are former Odeons, which subsequently became centres for Indian films, though the Mile End cinema had a short spell as a Sundown concert venue. Promoters Straight Music say they hope to use them regularly in future. The Clash's gig at Southampton Top Rank on February 13 is now confirmed, and they have added a second night at Bristol Colston Hall on February 24.

TWO OF THE BEST FROM TWO OF THE BEST

WISHBONE ASH
'JUST TESTING'
Their tenth studio album to coincide with their 10th anniversary tour

LYNYRD SKYNYRD
'GOLD AND PLATINUM'
A double album featuring the very best numbers from this legendary band

FOR DETAILS OF WHERE THESE ALBUMS CAN BE BOUGHT AT DISCOUNTED PRICES, SEE ELSEWHERE IN THIS WEEKS N.M.E.

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OFF THE RECORD

Hope's R&B festival LP

THE R&B FESTIVAL, which took place at London's Hope & Anchor over two weeks in November, has been captured for posterity on an album to be released on February 15 by Albion (distributed by Arista) at a budget price. It goes under the title of 'The London R&B Sessions At The Hope & Anchor', and there are 16 tracks playing for almost an hour. Acts featured include Lew Lewis Reformer, The Pirates, Wilko Johnson, Red Beans & Rice, Little Roosters, The Blues Band, The Bogey Boys, The Untouchables, The Bishops, The Cannibals, The American Blues Legends package and the Hope House Band.

● To coincide with his upcoming UK tour, **Jerry Lee Lewis** has an EP released by Bulldog Records on January 31 — the four vintage tracks are 'Bonnie B', 'Baby Baby Bye Bye', 'Down The Line' and 'I'm Feeling Sorry'. Out on the same day and label is a four-track EP by **J. D. Sumner & The Stamps,** who support Lewis on his British dates.

● With her new single 'Play It As It Lays' recently released by Polydor, **Alicia Bridges** now has her album of the same title issued this weekend.

● N.B. Records have signed U.S. band **The 49 Americans,** who are based in Florida, and this week release their 14-track single (that's right, 14 tracks) at the low price of 70p. Distribution is by Rough Trade, or from N.B. at 11 Ferrestone Road, Hornsey, London N8. (Price includes p&p.)

● **Furious Baton Charge** release their 14-track cassette 'Easter Time'. Send a blank tape and SAE to D. Quantick, A8, Ifor Evans Hall, 109 Camden Road, London.

● Following their 12-inch EP on Rhesus Records last year, **The Tunes** this week release their first seven-inch single 'She's My Girl' — though, under a licensing deal with Rhesus, this one appears on RSO Records. As for Manchester-based Rhesus themselves, they issue a single titled 'No Way' by **The Donkeys** in mid-February.

● London-based reggae-jazz band **Tribesman** are currently recording their second album for The Label Records, as the follow-up to 'Street Level' — titled 'Sunburst', it's due out in March. Their new single 'Finsbury Park' has just been issued.

● 'Smallcreep's Day' — the solo album by **Mike Rutherford** of Genesis, plans for which were reported last week — is now officially set for release by Charisma on February 15, preceded this weekend by the single taken from it 'Working In Line'. Also out this week on the same label is a single by Dublin-based four-piece **Berlin** titled 'Over 21'.

● 'Changeling' is the title of the new **Simple Minds** single, taken from their album 'Real To Real Cacophony', and out this week on Arista. And the band are planning a short series of UK dates next month to promote it.

● An **Ian Matthews** single titled 'Crying In The Night', penned by Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks, is issued by Rockburgh Records on February 1. It's followed two weeks later by his double album 'Discreet Repeat', comprising 27 tracks recorded over the last nine years. Matthews and his band will be touring Europe shortly, and are planning a date at London Victoria The Venue in late March.

● Belfast outfit **Protex,** whose 'I Can't Cope' was recently voted the best 1979 single by an Ulster band, have their debut album 'Strange Obsessions' released by Polydor in April. The title track is issued as a single on February 15.

● **Doll By Doll's** new single 'Gypsy Blood', issued by Automatic Records on February 8, is the title track from their recent and highly acclaimed LP of the same name. It's reported that some copies of the album have inadvertently been sold without the inner sleeve, and anyone acquiring such a copy should write to Doll by Doll, Hard Ventures, 24 Clifton Villas, London W9, who will gladly rectify the error.

● Manchester band **The Freshies** release a new single 'My Tapes Gone' on February 12, their fourth on their own Razz label. The B-side is a re-recording of 'Moonmidsummer' from their first EP. Both titles were penned by front man Chris Sievey.

● The long-awaited new **Horslips** album 'Short Stories/Tall Tales' is finally released by Mercury this week.

● Swansea band **The Midnight Circus** have just released their first cassette album 'The Bland Craze'. To obtain a copy, send a blank C-60 cassette and SAE to Bland Craze Recordings, c/o Mike Sinclair, Neuadd Lewis Jones, Singleton Park, Swansea.

● Axis Records, who issued their first four singles last week, have had to change their name to 4 A.D. — because they've found that an Axis label, owned by Nigel Thomas, already exists. The singles in question are 'Junction One' by **The Fast Set,** 'She's My Girl' by **Bearz,** 'Dark Entries' by **Bauhaus** and 'No Turning Back' by **Shox.**

● **Motorhead** are currently working on an EP which, in effect, is a potted history of their career. It features two tracks from their days with the Stiff and Chiswick labels, plus two contemporary items. They'll finish it before they leave for an extensive European tour, opening at Belfast Ulster Hall on February 7.

● American based group **Skinny Kid Band** have signed a worldwide deal with PVK Records, who release their first UK single 'Morning Star' this week.

● **The Three Degrees,** who are due to return to Britain in April, have their new single 'Without You' issued by Ariola on February 8.

● A new single from **Guardian Angel,** who topped the reggae chart recently with 'China Gate', is issued by Matumbi Records (through EMI) this Friday. Titled 'Self Service Love', it's avaiable in both 7" and 12" form.

● 'Saint Or Sinner' is the new single from **The Real Thing,** released by Pye Records on February 1.

THE FABULOUS POODLES

WORLD'S LARGEST LP

WE'VE HAD coloured vinyl, oddly-shaped records, even smellies — and now comes the latest gimmick. It's the world's largest record — a 10,000 limited edition of The Fabulous Poodles' third album 'Think Pink' in a giant sleeve measuring 24" × 24", or four times the size of a normal cover! They say they've conceived this idea because the LP is going to be a monster! It's issued on February 8, and a single taken from it, titled 'Bionic Man', will be released in early March to coincide with a UK tour. The Poodles are currently supporting Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers in the States, and they could find themselves working with Petty again when he tours here in March.

NEWS BACKGROUND

Blondie for end-of-year return tour — THEY TELL NME

BLONDIE intend to return to Britain in a year's time, at the very latest. That's the message they gave *NME* readers as they flew back to the States, at the end of their triumphant 1979-80 tour. Said Chris Stein, when I caught up with the group at the AIR Studios in London's West End: "It could be less than a year, but we had such a ball here this Christmas that we're already thinking in terms of another visit over next Christmas and New Year period."

He added that next time they come they'd like to concentrate on stand-up venues, playing a string of dates at each one. "Much as we appreciated the reception we got on this trip, we think we're more suited to the intimacy of having the audience clustered around us, rather than the more formal setting of somewhere like the Hammersmith Odeon," he observed.

Any chance of their coming back earlier, maybe to play a summer festival? Debbie Harry clearly didn't welcome the idea. "Our experience in the States is that they're usually a rip-off, and the chances are the weather's terrible. And we've been conditioned against them because, back home, so few people are going to open-air events on account of the petrol shortage."

So it's looking like late autumn again — though, admittedly, their 1980 schedule is flexible. In fact, to be honest, they have no firm plans at all for the year.

"Our first priority is to look for a suitable film project, with Debbie starring and me providing the music," explained Stein. "And I'm also getting involved with producing other acts, like The Lounge Lizards."

"I wanna spend some time working with young artists," chipped in Debbie. "We'll also be involved this spring in helping to compile the official authorised Blondie book. But apart from that, we don't have anything specific coming up. You could say it's going to be a year of experimentation, rounded off with another UK visit."

Although Blondie topped the 1979 NME Chart Points Tables in both singles and albums, and could conceivably repeat their singles achievement in 1980, there seems little chance of the band heading the LP list this year. Because at present they have no plans whatever to record a new album.

"Why push it? There's no hurry," said Stein. "I think you'll find that the gap between 'Eat To The Beat' and the next album will be considerably longer than the gap between 'Parallel Lines' and 'Eat To The Beat'. But we'll certainly get around to another LP some time this year."

There's also talk of a live album, and they already have tapes of their January 12 concert at Hammersmith. Which is why they were at the AIR Studios — editing and mixing those tapes for use on America's ABC network. "Some of this Hammersmith material may also turn up as B-sides of future singles," revealed Stein.

The next official single is expected to be 'Atomic' from 'Eat To The Beat'. Apparently, when it was originally recorded, it ran about seven minutes and had to be edited in order to fit on the album. But a somewhat longer version is envisaged for the single, plus a full-length 12-inch.

The follow-up single will probably be 'Call Me' — the title track from the new Giorgio Moroder movie, which Blondie perform over the film's opening credits — though this is dependent on exactly when the picture is released in this country.

As far as other films are concerned, Debbie's non-singing showcase *Union City* should open in February or March — and according to Stein, there's a chance that it may be premiered first in London, rather than New York. Then there's *The Roadie* starring Meatloaf, and featuring Blondie as themselves in a 30-minute guest spot (including their interpretation of the June Carter standard 'Ring Of Fire'), as well as guest appearances by Alice Cooper and Roy Orbison, among others — that's due out in the spring.

But the main object, as far as movies are concerned, remains the finding of a creditable musical vehicle — either for Debbie, or for Blondie as a whole. And they'll be devoting much of 1980 to this aim.

Around November time, we can also expect to see the advent of a 'Greatest Hits' album — which could prove to be a shrewd move, as they should have the market pretty much to themselves. After all, practically everyone else released their compilation albums last autumn!

So now they've gone, after an incredible tour — during which some tickets changed hands for as much as £80 apiece, irrespective of the panning their concerts received from certain critics (including two *NME* writers). But as Chris Stein commented with a wry smile: "We've learned to accept the fact that, at every show, there's always someone who's right while 3,000 others are wrong."

DEREK JOHNSON

NEWS ROUND-UP

KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND, who cancelled their four projected British dates (January 17-20) at short notice with no reason given, are now planning a considerably longer tour for the March-April period — taking in smaller towns as well as the major venues. Meanwhile, the follow-up to their current hit single 'Please Don't Go' is released by TK next month, titled 'Let's Go Rock And Roll'. And their compilation 'Golden Hits' album is due out on February 15.

JOHNNY MARS, the U.S. bluesman, has formed his own British band called 7th Sun. With Mars on vocals and harmonica, the line-up features Brian Miles (guitar), Wayne Elliott (bass), John White (drums) and Harry Packer (keyboards). They debut at **London Islington** Hope & Anchor next Wednesday (30), and will be gigging extensively in February.

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART & The Magic Band will be here in March to record tracks for Virgin with whom, as reported last week, they've just re-signed after a six-year gap. They have advised Virgin that they're keen to play some live dates during their visit, and attempts are now being made to set up a number of gigs for them.

SHOWADDYWADDY headline two concerts at **Croydon** Fairfield Hall on Sunday and Monday, March 16 and 17 (tickets priced £4.50, £4, £3.50 and £3). It's likely that a few more dates will be lined up around the same period.

THE KNACK are due back in the UK in March, mainly for promotion on their new album 'The Little Girls Understand', scheduled for release next month by Capitol. Their only live appearance is expected to be a one-off London concert, currently being finalised.

KEVIN COYNE headlines a Grand Benefit Gala at **London Battersea** Town Hall next Wednesday (30), as part of the continuing campaign to save the local Arts Centre from closure.

THE SOUL BOYS have **London** dates in early February at Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle (2 and 9), Islington Hope & Anchor (3) and Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's (6).

RONNIE LANE and his new band have added another six dates to their debut tour, reported last week — at **Hatfield** The Forum (February 16), **Reading** University (19), **Swansea** Nutz Club (20), **Bangor** University (21), **Liverpool** University (22) and **Leicester** Main Arena (23).

THE REGULARS (a.k.a. Reggae Regulars), just back from Germany after a lengthy tour, play **London** School of Economics (February 2), **Bournemouth** Royal Exeter Hotel (3), **Huddersfield** Cleopatra's (9), **London Victoria** The Venue (12), **London New Cross** Goldsmiths College (14) and **London** Central Polytechnic (15), with more being set. Their new CBS single 'Don't Stay Out Late'/'Rude Boy Gone Jail' is released this weekend, and their second album 'Armageidon Rock' is scheduled for early May.

THE Q-TIPS, the Streetband splinter group and soul revivalists, have gigs in and around **London** at Putney Half Moon (tonight, Thursday), Acton Oak Tree (Friday), Wealdstone Queen's Arms (Sunday), St. Albans Horn Of Plenty (January 30), Putney Half Moon (31), Wealdstone Queen's Arms (February 2) and Uxbridge Brunel Univeristy (3). They also have a residency at London Fulham Golden Lion every Friday in February.

ASWAD, already announced for a concert at **London Victoria** The Venue on February 1, have now set additional dates — at **Colchester** Essex University (February 2), **Canterbury** Odeon (5), **Brighton** Top Rank (6), **Bristol** University (8), **Leicester** University (19), **Sheffield** University (20), **Fife** St. Andrew's University (21), **Aberdeen** University (22), **Glasgow** University (23) and **London Southgate** Royalty (24). This activity ties in with the February 22 release of their new single 'Rainbow Culture' on Grove Records (distributed by Island), as a prelude to their upcoming album due in the spring.

GANG OF FOUR have re-scheduled all the dates they were forced to cancel last autumn, after Jon King and Andy Gill were injured in an unprovoked attack at a Leeds night club, and they've also added one or two extra gigs. Their dates are **Guildford** Civic Hall (tonight, Thursday), **Birmingham** University (Friday), **Loughborough** University (Saturday), **Liverpool** Eric's (February 1), **Bradford** University (2), **Cardiff** South Glamorgan Institute (4), **Portsmouth** Polytechnic (5), **Bristol** Trinity Hall (6), **London Camden** Electric Ballroom (7), **Retford** Porterhouse (8) and **Leicester** University (9). Appearing with them are The Au Pairs (this Friday and Saturday), Scritti Politti (February 1 and 7), The Mekons (2 and 9) and The Xpelaires (8).

WEIRD NOISE have lined up a second free tour, following the success of their autumn venture. This one features The Mob, Zounds and the all-girl Androids Of Mu. It's financed by voluntary donation and the sale of cassettes by the various bands. The package visits **Nottingham** University (tonight, Thursday), **Letchworth** Youth Club (Saturday), **Bishops Stortford** Triad Leisure Centre (Sunday), **London Woolwich** Thames Polytechnic (January 28), **High Wycombe** College of Higher Education (29), **London Enfield** Middlesex Polytechnic (30), **Bicester** Nowhere Club (31), **Slough** College (February 1), **Brighton** Sussex University (2), **London W.10** Acklam Hall (4) and **Watford** Carey Club (5). Special guests at selected gigs are The Astronauts, The Hamsters, The Entire Cosmos and The Blues Drongo All Stars.

DEF LEPPARD have added several more dates to their extensive UK tour, reported a couple of weeks ago — at **Manchester** Belle Vue (February 3), **Derby** Ajanta (7), **Birmingham** Top Rank (10), **Malvern** Winter Gardens (15), **Swansea** Brangwyn Hall (17) and **Blackpool** Norbreck Castle (28). Their gig on February 6 is now at **Colchester** Essex University instead of **Essex** University. These additions mean that their tour now comprises 34 dates.

ELECTROTUNES, whose first Cobra single 'If This Ain't Love' is out this week, complete their current **London** gig series at Southbank Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Fulham Greyhound (Sunday) and Camden Dingwalls (next Monday). The band, fronted by former G.T. Moore sideman Tony Hannaford and ex-Dirty Tricks singer-guitarist Adrian Cook, then set out on an extensive provincial tour. First confirmed dates are **Birmingham** University (February 1), **Aberavon** Nine Vaults (9), **Halifax** Good Mood Club (16), **Uxbridge** Brunel University (24), **Carmarthen** Trinity College (March 5) and **Stafford** North Staffs Polytechnic (7).

HAZEL O'CONNOR, who's just finished work on the film *Breaking Glass* co-starring with Phil Daniels, is now ready to start gigging. She begins at **London Kensington** Nashville on February 16, and further dates — in and out of London — are currently being arranged. Albion Records issue her new single 'Gigolo' in late February, and her album 'Glass Houses' in mid-March. The film soundtrack LP, written entirely by Hazel and produced by Tony Visconti, is due out in late spring to coincide with the release of the movie.

FIDDLER'S DRAM have added three more dates to their UK concert tour, reported last week, including a major London show at Drury Lane Theatre Royal on March 16. The other extra gigs are Chichester Festival Theatre (March 6) and Gt. Yarmouth Hippodrome (14).

URIAH HEEP add St. Austell New Cornish Riviera (February 23) and Poole Arts Centre (24) to their tenth anniversary UK tour. Their new single 'Carry On' is issued by Bronze this weekend — it's taken from their LP 'Conquest', due on February 15.

SLAUGHTER & THE DOGS have now found a new lead singer to replace Wayne Barrett, who left the band suddenly a few weeks ago halfway through a series of dates. The newcomer is Eddie Garrity, formerly Ed Banger of The Nosebleeds. The band have just finished recording their new album, for release by DJM in early March, and they'll be undertaking a major headlining tour to promote it. A single is scheduled for February.

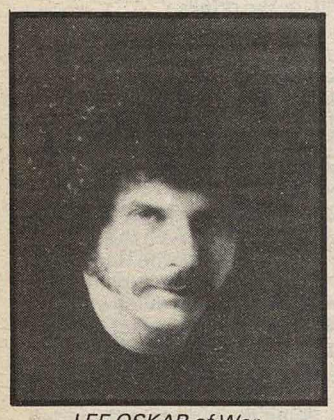
War–BS&T tour for early spring

THE DOUBLE–HEADER tour co-starring War and Blood Sweat & Tears, plans for which were revealed by NME on December 8, will be playing about ten concerts in Britain in the early spring before going on to Europe.

The first date to be announced officially is at London Rainbow on March 28, for which tickets are now available by post (priced £5.50, £4.50 and £3.50) from The Kruger Organisation, PO Box 460, Dept RWB, Brighton, Sussex BN1 5BQ — postal orders only, and enclose SAE. It's expected that a second night will be added at the Rainbow on March 29, though bookings are not yet being accepted for this date.

Among provincial dates pencilled in are Portsmouth Guildhall (March 27), Glasgow Apollo (April 2), Brighton Centre (4), Slough Fulcrum Centre (5), Coventry Theatre (6), Manchester Apollo (7) and Halifax Civic Theatre (9), with a couple more still to be added — but it's stressed that these are all still subject to confirmation, and tickets are not yet on sale.

War and BST joined forces as the result of coming together on the same record label, Lax (distributed here by MCA). War — originally fronted by Eric Burdon — now feature Danish-born singer and harmonica player Lee Oskar, who's had several hits in his own right in the States. And BST — now moving more into a black music direction — have David Clayton-Thomas back with them, after his brief venture as a soloist. There will be new album and single releases from both bands to tie in with the visit.



LEE OSKAR of War

FLOYD AT WEMBLEY

PINK FLOYD will play a string of concerts at London Wembley Arena in mid-June, according to the band's Roger Waters speaking at the weekend. He said they have already pencilled in ten days at the arena, though at least half of this will probably be taken up by rehearsals and erecting their massive set.

At this stage he doesn't know exactly how many nights they'll actually play there, but it's looking like four or five. Apart from the chance of a major open-air gig in the summer, these will be Floyd's only UK dates this year.

DAVE CROSBY PLAYS VENUE

DAVID CROSBY, who's recently been proving his worth as a solo performer in the States, brings his show to London next month to play three nights at The Venue in Victoria on February 26, 27 and 28. There'll be two spots each night at 8.15 and 11pm, and advance tickets cost £3.75 from the box-office or the Virgin Megastore in Oxford Street (admission on the doors is £4.25).

● Other newly confirmed bookings for The Venue include Eddie Grant (January 29), Rocket 88 and Blast Furnace's Revenge (February 3), The Smirks and Gods Toys (6) and Bobby Henry and The Risk (13).

TRAVERS TRAVELS

PAT TRAVERS returns to Britain after a lengthy absence to headline seven major concerts in the early spring, as part of an extensive European tour. Together with his re-shaped backing band, he plays Sheffield City Hall (March 24), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (25), London Hammersmith Odeon (26), Manchester Apollo (28), Birmingham Odeon (29), Newcastle City Hall (30) and Glasgow Apollo (31); tickets are on sale now at all venues. A new Travers album, as yet untitled, will be issued by Polydor to coincide with his visit.

Costello signs — for Riviera!

ELVIS COSTELLO and manager Jake Riviera have resolved their differences with WEA, following the demise of Radar Records. The new agreement means that Riviera will now own his own record company — F-Beat. A&R man for the new label will be Andrew Lauder, formerly managing director of Radar Records. And F-Beat's first release will be the Costello single 'Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' (Feb. 8) and album 'Get Happy' (Feb. 15).

Lene opens new Lyceum season

LONDON's Lyceum Ballroom re-opens early next month for another season of Sunday concerts. First night is February 3, with Lene Lovich starring, supported by Holly & The Italians and The Body Snatchers. There will then be 11 more shows, the last on May 6, before the venue closes for a complete re-fit which is likely to take best part of a year. Other confirmed bookings are The Clash (February 17, already sold out), The Only Ones (24) and The Inmates (March 16).

NAZ HEADLINE MARCH DATES

NAZARETH headline a nine-venue UK tour in March, their first here for a year, associated with the release this weekend of their new album 'Malice In Wonderland'. The LP, recorded in the Bahamas under the guidance of former Steely Dan and Doobies guitarist Jeff 'Skunk' Baxter, is regarded by the band as their most significant since 'Razamanaz' -- and it features such additions to their basic sound as vibes, sax and backing vocals. Two of the tracks, 'Holiday' and 'Ship Of Dreams', are issued simultaneously as a single.

Their concerts — for which tickets are now on sale — are at Dunstable Queensway Hall (March 6), Newcastle Mayfair (7), Glasgow Apollo (8), Edinburgh Odeon (9), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (12), Birmingham Odeon (13), Leicester De Montfort Hall (14), Sheffield City Hall (15) and London Hammersmith Odeon (16). It's possible that one or two dates may be added, before Naz leave for a European tour.

AVERAGE WHITES DUE IN MAY FOR 20 GIGS

AVERAGE WHITE BAND return to Britain in the spring to headline their longest tour here for some years. They'll be playing 20 concerts, opening at Derby Assembly Rooms on May 15, and running through the first week of June — finishing with a couple of major London shows. Full details of their itinerary are at present being finalised, and will be announced shortly. And RCA will be issuing a new AWB album to coincide with their visit.

● David Gates is also being lined up for a number of dates here in the spring, it was learned this week.

SPYRO GYRA'S UK GYRATIONS

SPYRO GYRA, the American jazz-funk band whose 'Morning Dance' album and single both climbed high in the charts last year, headline their first British tour next month — their only previous appearances here were in London last summer. They'll also be filming a *Rock Goes To College* show for BBC-2 during their visit, and MCA release their new album 'Catching The Sun' on February 8.

Tour dates are Sheffield City Hall (February 7), Newcastle City Hall (8), Bristol Colston Hall (10), Croydon Fairfield Hall (11), Slough Fulcrum Centre (12), Birmingham Odeon (13), Manchester Apollo (14), Edinburgh Odeon (16), Liverpool Empire (18), Hatfield The Forum (19), Poole Arts Centre (20), Brighton Dome (21), London Hammersmith Odeon (22) and Oxford New Theatre (24). Tickets should be available at all box-offices by this weekend priced £4, £3.50, £3 and £2.50 (Hammersmith); £3.50, £3 and £2.50 (elsewhere). Promoter is Ian Wright of the MAM Agency.

OLDFIELD TOURING SMALLER VENUES

MIKE OLDFIELD is planning a spring tour of smaller venues, taking in Ulster, Scotland and England. Unlike his 1979 tour of Britain and Europe, which featured him with a huge orchestra and chorus, he'll be backed on this occasion by a much reduced group — though he hasn't yet determined its exact make-up. The idea is still in its embryo stage but, if all goes well, Oldfield hopes to be on the road around April or May.

RAINBOW, GABRIEL EXTRA

RAINBOW have added another three dates to their upcoming UK tour, including a second night at Stafford Bingley Hall on February 24, and tickets are on sale now all at the one price of £4. The other two gigs are at new venues — Brighton Centre (March 4) and Cardiff Sophia Gardens (5) — and here tickets go on sale from February 1 priced £4.50 and £4 (Brighton) and £4.50 only (Cardiff). Apart from Ingleston and Deeside, all the originally announced dates are now sold out.

Special travel facilities have been arranged for the shows at Ingleston Royal Exhibition Hall (February 22) and Deeside Leisure Centre (27). For Ingleston, there's a regular shuttle bus service starting at 5.30 pm, leaving from Edinburgh St Andrews Square. And for the Deeside gig, special trains will run every 15 minutes from Liverpool Lime Street Station to Stratton Deeside. Similar arrangements apply for the return journeys.

PETER GABRIEL has added another London concert to his UK tour, which opens in Birmingham on February 23 — it's at the Hammersmith Odeon on March 13, following his shows there on the two previous nights. Tickets are on sale now priced £4, £3 and £2. His backing band for the tour comprises Larry Fast (synthesisers), Jerry Marotta (drums) and Tony Levin (bass), plus a guitarist still to be named. This weekend sees the release by Charisma of Gabriel's new single, featuring two self-penned tracks 'Games Without Frontiers' and 'I Don't Remember', the first of which is taken from his upcoming album.

Random Hold are the support act for the whole of the Gabriel tour but, prior to this, they have dates in their own right at London Kensington Queen Elizabeth College (February 8), Canterbury Keynes College (11), Birmingham University (15) and Uxbridge Brunel University (17).

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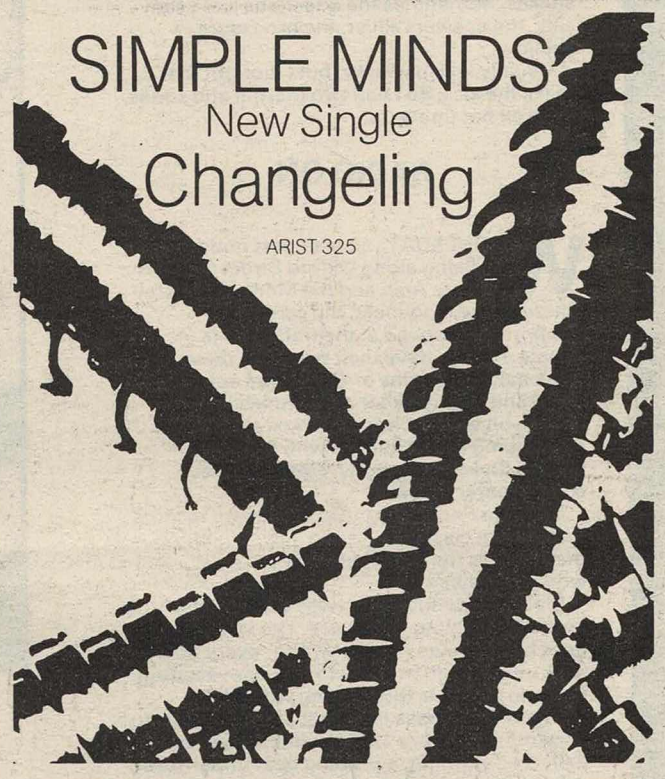

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Only A Hobo Only A Star

The Pretenders are number one, top of the pops. But where there's 'Brass' there's sadness and Chrissie Hynde regrets some of the changes and new commitments success has brought. "I'd sooner just skate by. I guess now I've got to be responsible and grow up."

Interview by PAUL MORLEY

Pictures by PENNIE SMITH

WEDNESDAY: 7.56 am. Turning over in bed and feeling sick in the stomach thanks to the coca-cola and chocolate the previous night, I had a feeling the day wasn't set to be splendid.

Next to my ear, on *Radio One* Dave Lee Travis told me with obscene cheeriness that The Pretenders were number one in the charts. I had suspected that 'Brass In Pocket' was tops in the BBC chart when I went to sleep on Tuesday night. That afternoon their publicist had switched the time I was due to meet the group, so I easily guessed that they were suddenly obliged to do (as they say) *Top Of The Pops.* Because they were top of the pops.

Early Wednesday morning the appointment was pulled forward again; a quick interview fitted in before rehearsals and final run through in the bold new *TOTP* studios.

After getting up, putting some teasin' Cornell Dupree wake up music on the stereo, having been told I was to meet The Pretenders at the revised, appalling time of 12.30 pm, I mixed a couple of Martini and sodas. Not what I'd usually do, but I was feeling nervous. Interviewing pop people still gives me the shakes. Sometimes the questions just seem silly, the answers sillier, the procedure shallow.

Usually I'd sip whisky, but I thought that'd make me sick. So I had two Martini and sodas, and I all but threw up.

RADIO ON

WEDNESDAY: quarter past midday. Walking along Oxford Street towards Marble Arch and the Montcalm Hotel where we were to meet, the cars have temporarily stopped at the traffic lights. A couple of them have their windows down, and obviously *Radio One* or *Capital* are spinning the brand new number one — that classy middle bit where Chrissie Hynde tells what she's going to use joins in with the usual Oxford Street cacophony, creating a neat contemporary noise.

'Brass In Pocket' is one of those rare records that is both classic pop song and something that catches the imagination of the nation and won't stay away.

Blondie's debut smash was a bit like that, 'Denis' — floating insistence. The last few days have shown I'm not wrong; every time I walk into a room or away from a conversation, Chrissie Hynde is threatening what she's going to use. 'Brass In Pocket' is a great way to remember January 1980; Hynde's studiously delivered warning, a probing beat underneath, an incongruous west coast laze with a dash of command.

The Pretenders' guitarist is blond James Honeyman-Scott. In no sense a bad person, he is what you would describe as a guitar bore. He's responsible for the convincing, almost glorious eclecticism of The Pretenders' music, which soaks up more tradition than Costello and The Clash put together only for Hynde to add new twists of tension, toughness and exhilaration. He's also very honest.

I say to him that he has plenty of reference points, a detailed knowledge of golden moments in pop's past that he isn't afraid to use — this is obvious from the full colour and nagging familiarity of Pretenders' songs.

"I do steal from a . . ." he begins, pulling back to put it another way. "I've so many influences, people like Ron Wood, but as far as getting songs together, I go for the overall sound, the drum pattern . . . I really think that simplicity is the key. I like to keep things really simple. Like 'Brass In Pocket' is one guitar riff with the bass note changing from an A to F sharp, from D to E, y'know?

"I probably pinched the riff off an old Barry White record, cos I used to take those riffs and put them back to front again, y'know. Like 'Love's Theme' by Love Orchestra . . . it was hanging in the air for a long time, I had that riff two years ago."

James Honeyman-Scott is proud of this fact, and why the hell not?

He is a musician straight out of rock history circa Mott The Hoople, Free and The Faces, fond of dropping names like Rod Stewart, Paul McCartney, Ron Wood and Pete Townshend. He's anonymous, chunky and pally enough to be a Wings sideman. He's also, like I said, a guitar bore.

So what's he in The Pretenders for? What's he looking for?

"I love playing good guitar through great amps, playing knockout songs and generally having one hell of a good time on stage. I mean, you'll catch me bouncing up and down on 'Kid' and 'Brass' and 'Sobbing', or especially, man, when you hit that opening chord and you see the kids know the song and you get an instant reaction from it. And so you'll catch me on a good gig falling into the bloody amps, falling into the drum kit, cos I'm having one hell of a good time.

"I remember seeing Rod Stewart doing 'Maggie May' on TV when he was with The Faces and the band stopped playing and he just had the audience singing. It must have been great. Everybody having a great time. That's what a gig is all about in my opinion."

As he's telling me this I make pains to keep a face that is totally neutral.

NICK LOWE

WE SEE the first part of The Pretenders' history through the eyes of Nick Kent and Honeyman-Scott.

Hynde fled from Akron, Ohio, America in 1973, and for the next few years trailed in and out of various loser ventures, a traveller, wilfully free and easy and hopeful. She worked for the *New Musical Express* for a year: quitting because "I was bored with it. It wasn't really my thing." A time in Paris saw her first involvement in a rock group. She returned briefly to America, and another group involvement. Back to London, and a link with Malcolm McLaren, who was formulating his Situation and how to apply it; Hynde was too singular and assured to fall within his plans. During the months of '76 and '77 she went on to brief encounters with such punk pioneers as Scabies, Jones, Kent, Sensible and Vanian. She found affinity with none, perhaps alienated by their aggressive denial of any past.

The Pretenders began to form, Hynde finding musicians that were positive, mature and enthusiastic, but untouched by the purest punk values.

"Chrissie got together with this drummer from Ladbroke Grove called Gas Wild, and he came from Hereford and said he knew this bassist called Pete Farndon who had just come back from Australia playing in a group called The Bushwackers. He and Chrissie seemed to hit it off, and eventually they kicked out the drummer so it was just the two of them. They went through this period auditioning drummers, and Pete, who knew me from Hereford, asked me if I could help them out while they were auditioning.

"A little while later they asked me back to do some sessions, and I went through this four or five times, going back and forth, and I was engaged at the time, but I just thought it was too good to miss out on. I was enjoying myself so much. We'd gone in and done the demo for 'Stop Your Sobbing'; the drummer at the time was a guy called Jerry who played on the record. Nick Lowe expressed an interest in producing, and he is a big influence! Chrissie and Pete said to me 'I don't know whether you want to join or not but we've got Nick Lowe producing'. So I left everything in Hereford and we did 'Sobbing' with Nick and it got into the charts.

"The drummer was really into boogie-woogie, a seasoned drummer, and he left, and as luck would have it, I used to be in a band in Hereford with drummer Martin Chambers, so he came down, and that's how The Pretenders came about."

Chrissie Hynde, James Honeyman-Scott, Pete Farndon and Martin Chambers.

LOOK OUT HERE COMES CHRISSIE

IN A two-level suite on the first floor, Honeyman-Scott rings for some alcohol. Hynde hasn't arrived. Enormously affable, the guitarist doesn't seem to answer the questions I ask. He talks enthusiastically but drably. We wait for the drinks.

The drinks arrive. A bottle of bourbon catches the guitarist's eye. His conversation spins off at a tangent.

"The way we put the music together, I think it's everything . . . I think I can play every . . . well, I don't know if I can now . . . but I used to be able to play every fast solo in the book."

I know the book well.

"I was really proud of the solo on 'Kid', that was my finest hour, y'know, even though it was probably a steal from George Harrison or something. You don't need to overplay. I like keeping things subtle. Like the middle of 'Brass In Pocket' there's a little guitar bit that goes *der der la la,* and that's just something from some Motown record, Steve Cropper or something."

Yes, but how about the hype that shrouded The Pretenders from a very early day? James appears to mishear me. "Ah, yeah, this whole woman explosion, the hype thing . . . there is no use in denying the knockout talent that Chrissie has for writing songs and being a damned fine guitarist, one of the best."

Back to guitars already?

"I see her as a guitar player in the vein of Lennon, Brian Jones, Neil Young. She really does go on feel, she can really pull out solos. I am better technically, but I can't play some of the solos she can because they are all feel. Mind you, we both have a liking for the same guitarists."

I wonder if there exists a positive balance between Honeyman-Scott's analytic approach and Hynde's obvious intuition. Honeyman-Scott carries on talking about guitar playing.

"Well Chrissie and I fire off each other like mad as far as guitar solos go. We were at somebody's New Year's Eve party, and there were loads of great guitar records being played on the record player, and everyone in the room was jabbering on about all sorts of nonsense, and me and Chrissie were jammed up against the speakers listening to this Neil Young break. We both have the same influences, someone like Neil Young, who has so much feel, like there are no rules, same with Jeff Beck . . ."

I try and move away from guitars. How do you feel about Chrissie's character and her stance within the group? I'm preparing the way for questions I don't get a chance to ask because . . . LOOK OUT! HERE COMES CHRISSIE!!

"Yeah . . . the majority of the TV and press completely focus on Chrissie, and she's just said 'No. I don't want that.' She just wants to be part of the group. Chrissie is attractive and they are going to try and push her as the next Debbie Harry, all of this boring nonsense. She doesn't want to know about that! She's a rocker! But that's what they try and put on us."

And it's going to be more acute from now on.

"Yeah."

LOOK OUT HERE COMES CHRISSIE

I'M sat in a chair with my back to the door, Honeyman-Scott is on my left, on a £1,000 sofa. We're both sipping bourbon. The door opens. Hynde comes in with the Warner Brothers' (parent company of Pretenders' Real Records) publicist. We're introduced. Chrissie hugs some tea, the publicist disappears.

Honeyman-Scott dumbly says, "We were just getting to your persona and stance within the group." Feeling pale-faced and ill anyway, I freeze into my chair. Just what I didn't want — to appear to be separating things.

"Mine?" she snaps, brutally, "What are you talking about me for?"

"'Cos I love you," jokes the guitarist.

"Eat shit," Hynde snaps back snidily. She talks very loudly, but I discover later it's more nerves than anything. Still, I shrink into my chair. What was it, I begin to think — 'temperamental bitch,' some had said: 'aggressive and horrible'.

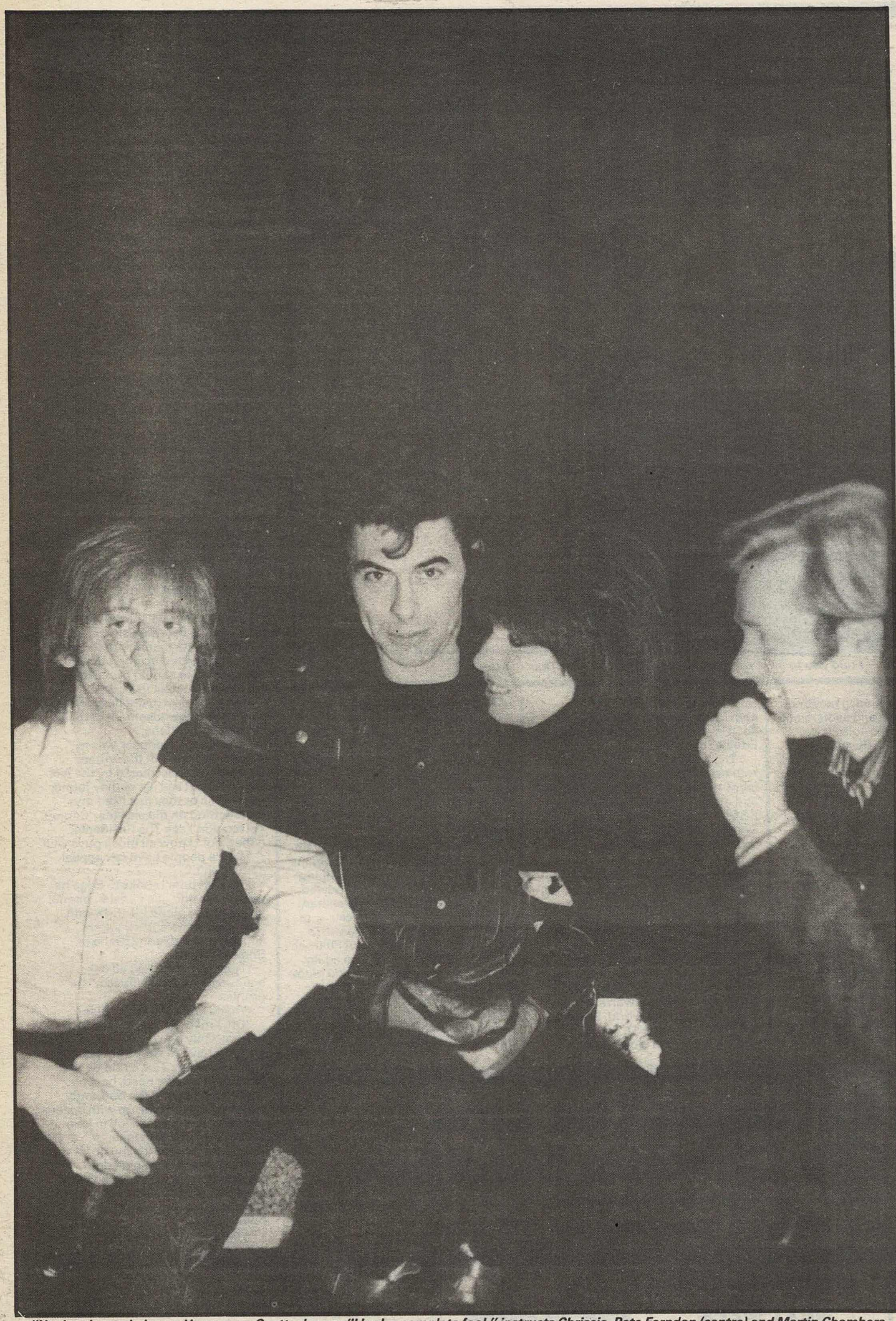
"WHAAT!" Hynde sees the suite for the first time. It's very expensively furnished, and on two levels connected by a splendid spiral staircase. "Fucking hell!" she explodes, bounding up the stairs.

"You've lost her for the interview," Honeyman-Scott helpfully informs me. He calls her, just to remind her. "Chrissie!" She calls back, "Hey, if this suite is rented can I have the bar of soap?"

Honeyman-Scott plays the role of resigned father figure. "Yes, you can have the bar of soap. Now, will you come down?" A spoilt, smothered voice comes back. "Yeah."

"Good girl."

She comes down the staircase. She's wearing a sweat shirt, leather trousers split at the knee and, like Jim Morrison, no



"Hush yo' mouth James Honeyman-Scott, else you'll look a complete fool," instructs Chrissie. Pete Farndon (centre) and Martin Chambers snigger at their silenced guitarist.

underwear. "Can you believe this!" she marvels. "Have you gone upstairs? It's got a bathroom!" As she sits down opposite me, Honeyman-Scott rubs it in.

"I'm just talking about how the cameras always come in on you, and how we try and avoid it . . . are you listening?"

"Yeah, I'm listening," she shouts. "This is getting to be a boring thing with this band, how we're always trying to play me down. I was thinking of it yesterday, we did an interview with *The Sun* — I hope you're not going to get drunk," she stares at Honeyman-Scott, quickly taking control. "Yeah, I was talking about it and I just thought why should we have to talk about it!

"SHIT! That's it, I don't want to talk about it."

After this quick torrent of words, she suddenly stops. Not relishing a pause, I ask if it seems like it's been an overnight sensation.

"It's been damed hard work," Honeyman-Scott answers first, sounding ever more staid than before Hynde arrived.

"Yeah, it's been hard work. Anything we get we deserve. I might get a good kicking soon! No one's ever handed anything to me on a plate in my life."

There's the speed and noise of her conversation, but Hynde also has the further disconcerting habit of placing the emphasis and exclamation in all sorts of unexpected places. It takes me a while to get used to the abruptness and agitation, and by the time I have she's mellowed out and it's time to go. Was it always her intention to make music?

"No intentions," SNAP. "Up to a few years ago. I don't know. Yeah, ever since I was three. But y'know I didn't think of making it as a career. I didn't think of it ever."

She changes her mind three times in five seconds. I fumble. Career?

"Career! What does it mean? Y'know, you just don't wanna work, I didn't want to be a responsible adult."

You're working now; I think of her new schedule.

"Yeah, well I'm working now cos I'm doin what I like to do. I don't know, it's all a cliche, it's all been said before . . . yeah, of course I'm working. Fucking hard. But it's not like working for someone else and feeling unsatisfied. At least maybe I've got a chance now that I can be a musician where I can go home and write a song, and I'm not going to be like getting up in the morning and waiting on tables for eight hours, or modelling in front of a class of kids, and I was just standing there still . . ."

Hynde pauses. Honeyman-Scott takes his chance. "The work thing, the most we've ever had off in a stretch is four days. There's always been something to do; TV interviews, photos, rehearsals, recording! We're always busy . . ."

I decide to risk Hynde biting my head off, figuring if she does I'll leave the room, run away from home and start a new life somewhere. I saw your LP in a shop, autographed, and selling for £6.99. What's this about? Hynde draws her breath. Honeyman-Scott answers first.

"It's ridiculous! We do know about that, but I want to make it plain that I was the first of the group to see it. I was walking down Carnaby Street and I saw the LP in the shop window ..."

Hynde suddenly starts her answer.

"Well, who's going to buy an album . . . I look at it this way; we signed those albums (250) for our own purpose, it was all on the up and up. Now, if some bastard wants to sell the album for an extra two quid, fair enough. Personally I have no respect for collectors' items, I don't like collectors' items, I don't like even the people that collect things particularly. I think it's a waste of time and money. If someone wants to pay seven quid they're being ripped off and it's got fuck all to do with us."

Hynde smiles. "I've had a great idea. To keep it all honourable, I will go to Piccadilly Circus and stand on the statue and perform ... I won't actually tell you what I'd offer to do to anyone who'd pay seven quid, to make up the difference. If it's the personal touch they want ..." She waves the subject to a close.

The tea is delivered, on a silver tray. Hynde fiddles with the pot and the cups, signs for it, and mumbles something about the old *NME* she used to work for, the *NME* of Murray, Kent, MacDonald and Tyler. The *NME* of Baker, your scribe and Thrills she knows little about. Honeyman-Scott mutters about the suspicious Tony Stewart review in *NME*.

"I haven't read it yet. Didn't he like it?"

"He wasn't fond," admits Honeyman-Scott.

"Well you can't please all the people," Hynde reasons, attempting to pour the tea. "Fair enough, it's the guy's opinion, that's fine. What am I supposed to do?"

After a reasonable start she begins to get worked up. "If someone doesn't like it, if someone says I'm a lousy performer — I AM! Fair enough!" Her voice strains in agreement, "I agree! If someone says I look like I'm nervous YEAH! Y'know, if they say I look arrogant or smug, fair enough, they're the ones in the audience. Maybe we are, yeah, maybe we are." She laughs.

Honeyman-Scott misses the point. "Well it hasn't affected the sales at all. It's gone straight in at number one!" He leans close to the tape recorder. "So, Tony, if you want to put down anything else it'll probably go in at number one as well!"

"Look, just don't take it personally! It doesn't matter," Hynde whines. Honeyman-Scott swallows some bourbon, already beginning to flag a little. "Who gives a shit. It's a damn fine album."

His singer shakes her head. "Well, there's a lot of things I don't like about it. I'm never pleased."

You have high standards?

"Oh, it's weak," she pulls her face at her tea. "Can you beat that! No, if one thing doesn't sound right to me . . . it's hard enough having to hear your own voice . . . I dunno what it's like for you, but when you hear yourself on tape I always cringe . . ."

AUDIENCE

WE see the second part of The Pretenders history through the eyes of Chrissie Hynde.

Before you could blink, before 'Stop Your Sobbing' was in our outstretched hands — ingeniously mixing Ray Davies, Nick Lowe and a memorable girlie vocal — Chrissie was on the cover of a pop weekly. Plenty of people pointed at The Pretenders and casually if confidently passed notice that the group's future was assured. Some see this early period with some bitterness, for a mixture of reasons. Hynde isn't pleased either. The hype could have (maybe has) hurt the group.

"It was hard for me. We did everything back to front. We did this record 'Sobbing' and started to do some gigs. Now if I'd had my own way I would have said we'll do gigs and establish a following, but that's not the way things worked. And you've worked so long in this business and when things start happening finally you just go along with it.

"Obviously I would rather have established some sort of rapport with an audience before we did a record, because we did the record and quite a few people came to see us and we were pretty green in those days. I'd never ever been on stage before with a guitar and tried to sing at the same time. Straight away the press picked up on us and said you must go and see this band."

Did you expect that?

"Well fuck no!" she shouts at me, staring hard. "I thought we could really keep it cool, y'know, slowly work in little off-the-wall clubs. I thought we could work in place like the Moonlight (West Hampstead), because we thought it would be really lowkey, no one knows where it is, it's not a big venue like the Marquee. We go down there and it's like the event of the month. Every band in town is there.

"I know every band in town, well a good percentage, not just to say hi, but pretty well, you know, really good buddies of mine, and they'd all come along to see us . . .

"Oh, it's too early in the morning to go through all this . . . but do you see what I mean? We're going to do one of our first ten gigs and we get this response from the press and suddenly there's a whole audience out there who're not passing through saying 'Oh yeah, who's this?' Which is what the desired response it when you're new. But they'd all come to say 'Oh yeah, right, let's see if the loud mouthed . . . let's see if this is all it's cracked up to be?'

They're standing there like critical, cynical. It made it unpleasant in a way. I never felt comfortable in those early gigs.

"The Marquee gigs just before Christmas I really enjoyed, the only ones I have. That's fair enough, isn't it, to be able to play a year before you really start to feel OK?"

PRESSURE

CHRISSIE gulps at her tea, looks around the suite, turns her nose up a little.

"This is almost what I would call decadent. I'm anti-decadent. I hate decadence. It was really fashionable at one time, really desirable."

Are many of the pop star trappings coming to you?

"I've never seen anything like this. I've been chucked out of my flat. I would rather you just came to my flat. This was just sort of put up by the record company as a meeting place."

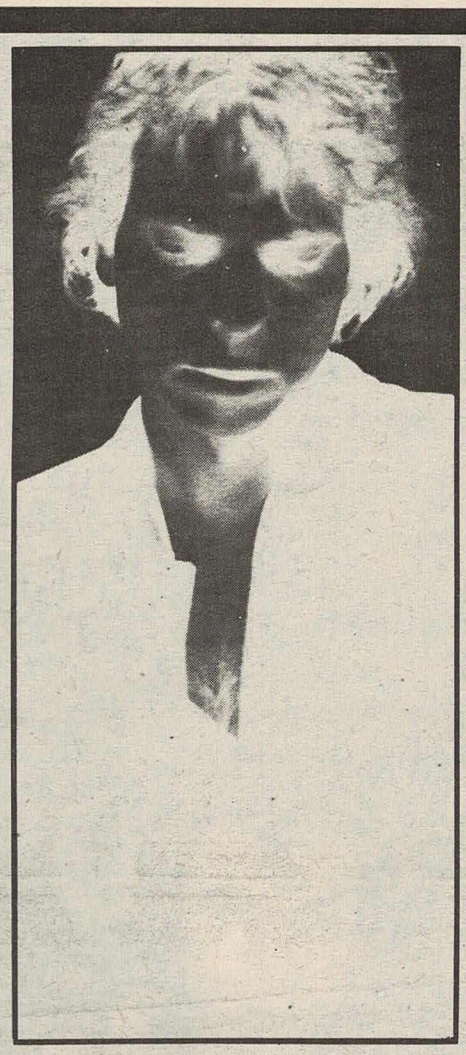
Honeyman-Scott is feeling the effects. He wades in. "As far as going on the road and staying in very nice hotels, it does make it a lot easier when you're 25 dates into a tour and you're edgy and very tired."

Continues page 49

Between The Lips Of The Chrome Machine

Damon Edge in conversation with Max Bell

"Hey, Pennie Smith — I told you to print my picture in negative."



"That's better."

THE INTRIGUINGLY monikered Damon Edge sits in a slump on one of *NME's* finest plastic leatherette armchairs, puffs at length, then utters forth a pronouncement.

"I'm sick of musicians, absolutely bored with them. One thing I'm adamant about is that Chrome will not be party to any hype. Most musicians like to accept the limitations of their hype, their clique. We prefer the isolation of our environment — San Francisco.

"Chrome are so removed from the music world. They'd like to forget that we've had any kind of success at all. That's OK. We get a fairly radical reaction too, in the USA. People who don't like us avoid us altogether so generally we only hear the positive side."

Damon Edge is drifting now, his voice dredged up from the gravel pit of his throat, his intonation so deep that it crackles like radio interference transmitted at a slow speed. You have to listen with both ears fully cocked or you go to sleep.

The 'we' Edge refers to is Chrome. Chrome is mostly him and fellow multi-instrumentalist Helios Creed ("very simple, very smart"), a West Coast oddity operating on the fringes of the rock avant garde — not used here as a misnomer for pretension but an inadequate description of Chrome.

Amongst 'Frisco's current crop of electronically oriented new music outfits Chrome are the sore thumb that won't heal. Unlike The Residents, they possess a human face or two in their evolution across four albums, a part in Ralph Records' cryptic sampler and a shortly to be released EP on English label Red Records. The only logical comparison is Pere Ubu, but that's a broken line. Where the Cleveland band function as a valid reflection of a bankrupt industrial wasteland, a modern hell, Chrome are stuck in the middle of American society at its financial and geographical greenest, where the current norm is represented by a whole crop of post-punk popsters.

In some ways The Residents or MX80 are as eclectic, as obviously fashioned, as 20/20 or The Pop, but Chrome carry a degree of commitment into their style that is both frightening and entertaining.

According to Edge, an unabashed, immodest prankster who usually winks when he's spinning a conceited web, Chrome are "magicians who don't relate to musicians. We put pictures in people's heads. It's information to trigger the imagination, therefore it's open to interpretation. We aren't a finished entity."

That's a good lead, Damon, but it is theory.

"Yup, in practice we're very self-indulgent. The band operates on a lot of levels, a lot of coincidences, a magical force. There's been a relation between recording the images and the reactions we receive in our personal lives."

Cosmic! Still, Chrome read-outs do sometimes back up this kind of claim. Their background, a meeting of semi-metal bands and esoterically engineered electronic noise ("It's taken me ten years to develop the tones we use; it may sound like mud to the average person but it's precise melody to me"), can be traced to Edge's developing interest in graphic art and oddball music whilst a student at Cal. Arts, LA.

A gigantic leap in time saw Chrome release their first album in 1976 (same week as The Ramones) on their own independent Siren label.

It was called 'The Visitation'. Record two, 'Alien Soundtracks', was Edge and Creed's first proper collaboration and started life as the music for a live sex show in the 'Fisco tenderloin. Edge had undergone some "straight trips" working on scores for MGM and sweeping up the cutting room floor for porn movie makers the Mitchell Brothers, and the chance to showcase 'Alien Soundtracks' in such an informal setting appealed to Edge's rough and ready intellect.

"The Mitchells had their live sex routines, which basically involved a lot of chicks feelin' their pussies, etc, and old guys beating off: whips and S&M, y'know. 'Chromosome Damage' or 'Pygmies In Zee Park' provided the setting." Nice.

THE BREAKTHROUGH was their third album, 'Half Machine Lip Moves', wherein the Chrome style of primal rock attack and densely treated instrumental lunacy (beating on fifty gallon oil drums with large mallets) really gelled. They sold out 14,000 copies, many on import in Europe, and stirred up sufficient interest to warrant Edge's visit to the antique world. Edge has subsequently sealed a deal to release the fourth album (and re-release its predecessors) on Beggars Banquet in the UK.

The new plastic is called 'Room 101', recorded after the 'Frisco compilation and before the Chrome EP 'No Humans Allowed' — the latter an accompaniment to a Chrome film which is the principal talking point on Edge's agenda. Take a deep breath.

"It's about the adventures of a guy called Pat Stevens, an elitist from the planet Grux, who is planet-hopping and collecting data. He gets busted by the Monitors, the inter-planetery police, escapes to Earth, steals some pygmies and ends up living with a decadent character name of Pharoah Chromium who turns him in again. Stevens slips the Monitors and hides out in the Light Fields and then the movie starts, back on Earth. There's no plot, no dialogue, but it has a strong visual flow. You'll like it, it's easy to understand."

Off-set, Chrome share the desire of those new wave artists who eschew taking an easy route when a hard option is available (that's about two per cent of them). Their methods are more painstaking than most and always cloaked in secrecy. Much of the film was shot on location in the San Francisco subway system after-hours so no one could see them. As for live shows?

"Like the albums, we use whatever it takes or needs. None of them have been conventional, they have nothing to do with clubs. We'll go into a bunker or borrow a barge, somewhere enviromentally inspiring. That way each time has a different feel."

Chrome's idea bank is well stocked with original material. Edge claims he isn't too interested in the competition.

"I like Iggy, Bowie, what I've heard of Pere Ubu and Throbbing Gristle. We have no idols, most people are full of bullshit."

It's possible to imagine that Chrome can now find a larger audience to share their music with — in Europe — but in 1976 they were real culture shock for the Bay Area.

"I'm not pissed off that we haven't been recognised at home. We have enough write-ups to keep our egos up and make enough money to survive. Once the album comes out (February) we plan to play in Europe, not America, but we may not ever play the known material.

Chrome alive will probably amount to a two-man show plus travelling data memory man and mixer extroadinaire John L Cyborg on dials. They should provoke a measured interest in Europe.

And they exist in the flesh after all, much to the bemusement of their corresponding fans.

"A lot of the feedback was in broken English, but the writers seemed to be fascinated by the fact they couldn't see us, or they found us psychic or they just liked my handwriting on the sleeves. 'Course, you couldn't see The Residents either, but I know all those guys well.

"Some people have sex appeal, some don't."

The next time I spoke to Edge he was on the end of a Parisian phone, just about to plight his troth with French rockette and emergent superstarlet Fabienne Shine of Shakin' Street.

"I just heard we had all our equipment stolen in 'Frisco," he grunts.

What's that splashing noise?

"Oh, I'm in the tub. It's full moon tonight. Only one guitar left so we're going to have to start from scratch again, huh huh. This could be the kick up the ass we need, heeyuk."

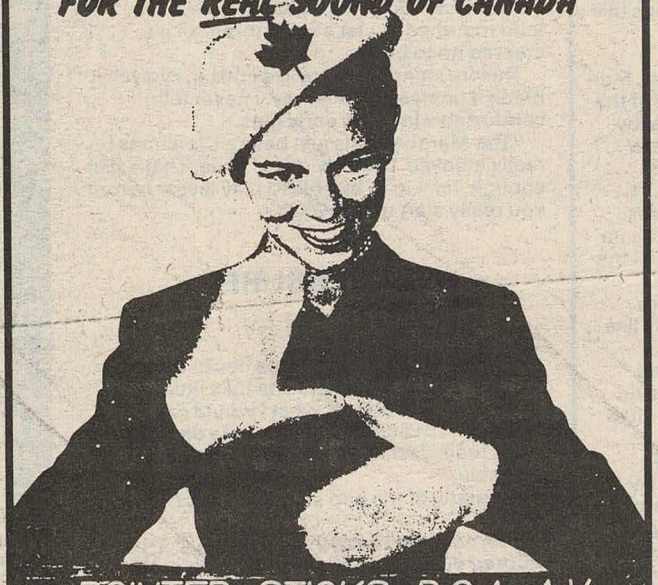
You don't sound too bothered.

"I'm not, I've come up with dozens of new melodies and I fell in love with this girl on the plane."

Chrome. Maybe it's music for the holocaust, or the magic Edge reckons it to be. "Or you can call it physics. Like smashing up an American bar-b-q grill, it sounds good."

Whatever planet you come from.

LOOK HARD
FOR THE REAL SOUND OF CANADA



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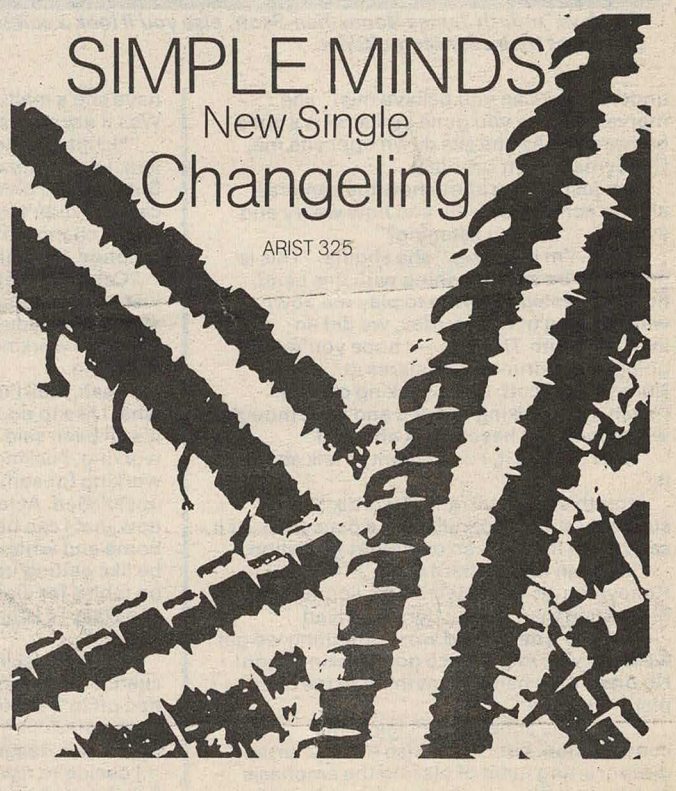

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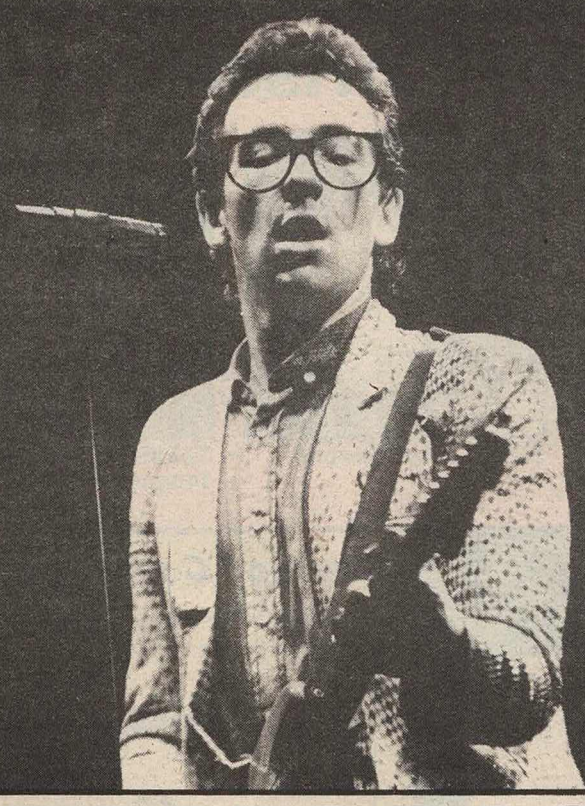
"Let me tell you 'bout the mystery prize"



Pic: Dennis O'Regan

ELVIS ROARS BACK

ELVIS COSTELLO & The Attractions played a 'secret' gig in a Hammersmith pub last Friday and proved that despite current legal troubles they are still very much in business.

In one of the group's most convincing live displays since their early gigs, the group highlighted material from the new album and dusted down familiar faves for the specially invited audience of 300.

The lucky crowd were sent tickets for the gig by manager Jake Riviera after they had entered an *NME Thrills* competition that had backfired on the paper and co-sponsors Oval Records.

The competition offered an Elvis Costello Demo Tape from 1976 but the prize was withdrawn after objections from Costello and Riviera, who promised competition entrants would receive a 'mystery prize' instead. They weren't kidding.

The gig had a refreshing atmosphere, far from the taint of the music biz, with El fans from all areas of the country and all ages and shades of the rock audience spectrum. Ashen-faced *NME* Editor, Neil Spencer, and a couple of other hacks who'd sneaked in (the paper was not informed of the gig) were clearly shaken by coming face to face with their readers. Did they appear to be somehow more noble, more enlightened than most rock audiences? Why were so many wearing glasses?

After a warm-up from the Wild Wax Disco, El and the Attractions quickly seized the time and become progressively more compulsive as the set progressed. Standouts were highly atmospheric versions of 'Chelsea' and 'Detectives' and all of the new material, which had an engaging precision and intricacy.

First of these was 'Five Gears in Reverse' which seemed to articulate something of Costello's feelings about his current legal battles. 'Human Torch', 'High Fidelity', 'Possessions' and 'Girls Talk' followed, with 'Can't Stand Up For Falling Down' providing a fitting climax.

Elvis himself was in rare stage mood, laughing, and joking with the audience, causing many to wonder why he didn't bring this aspect of his personality to bear at his concerts more frequently. 'Accidents Will Happen' was dedicated to Paul McCartney.

The gig was recorded so highlights may yet surface on vinyl. Afterwards, the writ-strewn combo mingled with the crowd and signed books, sleeves, and limbs. Also present were Basher Lowe, Dave Edmunds and Martin Belmont, the last of whom joined in on the encore. "I bet the *NME* never had a band this good before," quipped The King at one point. Well we did have The Beatles at an *NME* Poll Winners Concert once, El, but *we* ain't arguing.

RED SHOES

THRILLS

THRILLS

McCARTNEY BUST

Thrills gives the details and the background.

AS TV crews and hundreds of fans converged on Tokyo's Narita Airport last Tuesday to welcome multi-millionaire pop star Paul McCartney, 37, OBE, the ex-Beatle was detained by customs officials for possession of 220 grams (about half a pound) of top-grade weed.

Airport officials were alerted by McCartney's "listless" behaviour as he, wife Linda, their four children, and Denny Laine, Laurence Juber and Steve Holly of Wings entered the country. On searching his suitcase, they found the relaxant concealed in a toilet bag and the other in a suit pocket.

Macca was immediately transferred to the Drug Supervision Centre in a nearby Tokyo suburb where he can be held for a maximum of 15 days pending trial. Under the traditionally strict Japanese law, he's liable for either a jail sentence of up to 14 years, banishment from the country or a substantial fine or — at very worst — various combinations of the above.

He's been refused bail, but generously granted "some preferential treatment" during his mail-bag stitching time (or whatever it is they do in Far Eastern nicks) — coffee and bread in place of the standard rice and green tea. Wings have been forced to cancel their entire 11-day sell-out tour and a total of £184,000 is to be refunded to the 100,000 ticket-holders, although the more staunch supporters among them paid as much as £20 for a single seat.

A Tokyo music commentator told the press: "For a man like McCartney to violate the law means that he has no respect for Japanese law." Discounting

■ *Continues p.13*

THE BALLAD OF PAUL AND TOKYO

by A. N. — Potters Bar

Sitting in our Rolls Royce at Heathrow
Starting on our tour of Japan,
The wife said to me, how nice it would be
To smoke before the flight began.

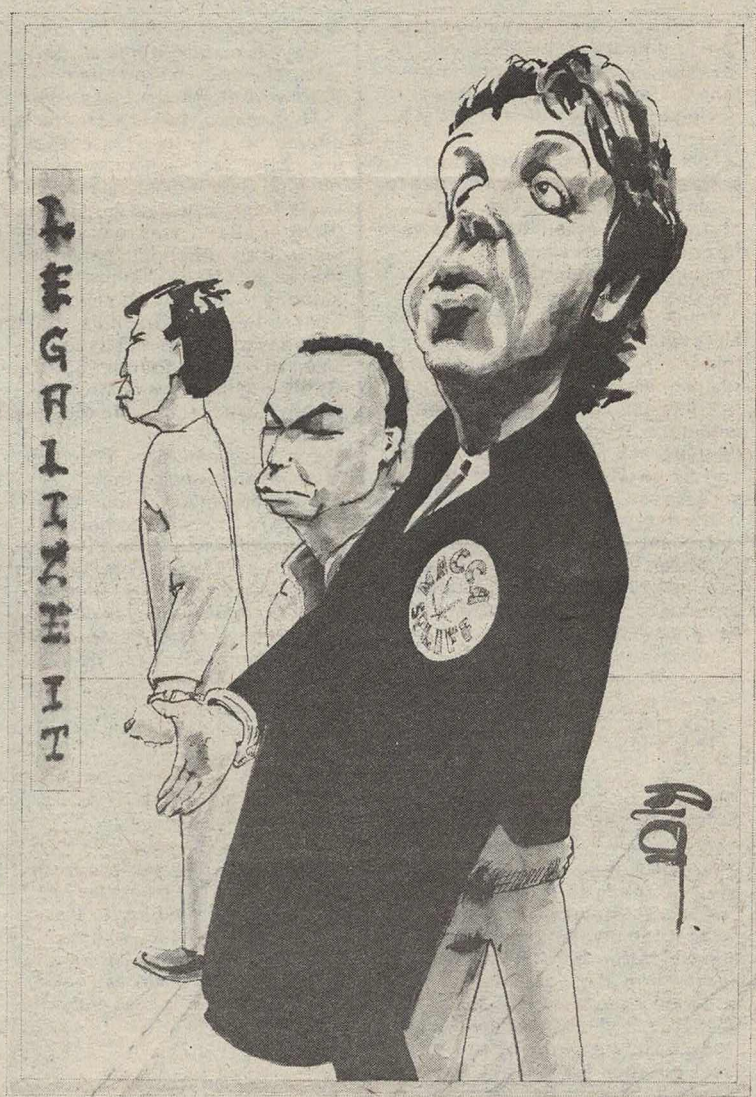
Christ you know it aint easy
You know how hard it can be
It's all in my suitcase
And I can't find the key.

So we set off for Tokyo airport
Winging our way through the sky
The band were excited, but I was still edgy
Wanted to be high — high — high,

Christ you know it aint easy
You know how hard it can be
And when we get to Tokyo
You'll get a nice treat from me.

Soon we landed at Tokyo airport
Saw thousands of nips from the air
The customs man asked, what's this
packet of grass?
I said, "I don't know how that got there",

Christ you know it aint easy
You know how hard it can be,
I've missed all my concerts,
Not to mention the fee.



Drawing: Tony Wright

Pic: Virginia Turbett

Just one of the floats at Southall Action Day

Why Marvin Gaye's blown out his tour

See page 12

Southall: Clarence Baker Acquitted

AT the Barnet Court Southall demonstration trials last Thursday the charges of assault and threatening behaviour against Misty manager Clarence Baker were dropped. Magistrate David Fingleton said there was insufficient evidence of identification to prove the case, which hinged on one PC Storrar who claimed to have seen Baker hurling bricks, one of which he maintained struck him.

Storrar's evidence seemed somewhat flawed. It seemed surprising that if he was, as he maintained, Baker's arresting officer that he should have no knowledge of the Mistyman's having been hospitalized with a bloodclot close to the brain after being allegedly brutalized by the police in the People Unite house.

Even so, the case being thrown out of court can be seen as a positive sign, considering that there appears to be no precedent at these trials for the results of cases to bear much relation to the evidence placed before the court. So far, three other members of People Unite have been given month-long jail sentences, with Misty soundman Chris Bolton currently serving his term.

Before the evidence was heard magistrate Fingleton told the court he had received a considerable number of telegrams from the UK and abroad. These telegrams, it is known, suggested that Baker be found not guilty. Fingleton deplored, he said, being urged to take "a certain course of action". "I want it to be clearly understood," he continued, "that this tribunal is here to decide the case on the evidence. The case will be heard according to the time-honoured system of a court of justice."

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS

The Lone Groover — **Benyon**

.....ANOTHER THING THAT MAKES ME WANNA THROW UP IS HOW TH' MEDIA KEEPS PEOPLE IGNORANT BY FEEDIN' THEM DILUTED CRAP NOT FACTS.....
IT JUST MAKES PEOPLE SO HYSTERICAL WHEN SCENES LIKE IRAN AN' STRIKES CROP UP.....
..IT ALSO LEAVES SPACE T'PULL STROKES LIKE "KEEP POLITICS OUT OF SPORT WHERE S.AFRICA IS CONCERNED BUT NOT WHERE RUSSIA COMES IN".....
-AS FOR RUSSIA, THOSE IMPERIALISTIC BASTARDS 'RE NO BETTER THAN TH' U.S.-BLOODY-A IN S.AMERICA, TH' WEST INDIES AN'.....
THANK YOU, THANK YOU, BUT WE MUST COME TO AN END.....
THAT'S ALL FOR THIS WEEK FROM TH' T.V. PROGRAMME THAT FEARS NO-ONE.....
....TUNE IN NEXT WEEK, FOR MORE SHOTS FROM TH' HIP, AT TH' SAME TIME...
REMEMBER, THAT'S NEXT SUNDAY.....
AT 6.30 AM.

The Changing Faces of Chrissie Hynde

Pic: Joe Stevens

Fresh from the American provinces, innocent and looking for fun.

Pic: Pennie Smith

The soulful, sensitive look.

Pic: Joe Stevens

However, hard living took its toll.

Pic: Chris Horler

Bit of a poser, this one.

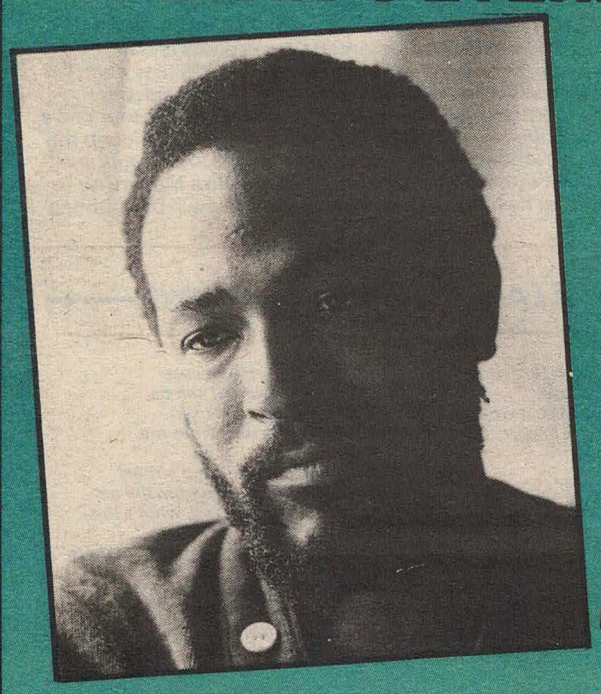
Pic: Kel Edge

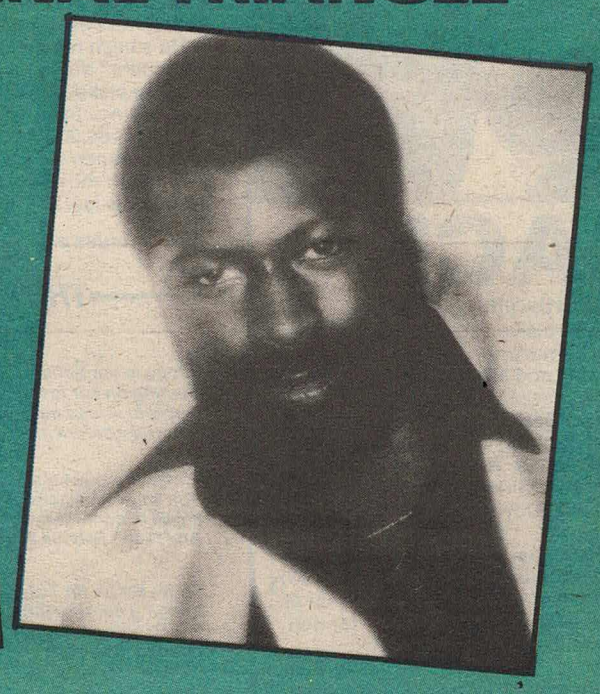
The sharp side of her tongue . . .

Pic: Stevenson

My God! What did you have for breakfast!

MARVIN'S ETERNAL TRIANGLE





FOR AN artist whose very name is almost synonymous with the sound of steamy bedroom soul Marvin Gaye himself has not been having too happy a time of late in his own emotional life.

Last Thursday night, two days before his European tour was due to begin in Birmingham, The Tamla Motown artist asked for the shows to be postponed for six weeks, claiming to be mentally and physically exhausted.

The *NME* learns, in fact, that Gaye has experienced something of a minor nervous breakdown as the result of his wife of four years, Jan, not only having left him but gone off with none other than Teddy Pendergrass, Marvin's best friend, and a man whose current large US success can be seen in the tradition of the genre that Gaye began.

It is said, indeed, that it is this European tour, an outing badly needed by the singer on financial grounds alone as the American IRS have recently taken possession of both his house and his studio, that was the cause of this tryst between Pendergrass and Jan Gaye: annoyed that her husband would be away for so long she announced she was leaving him to live with his friend!

Gaye is resting in Hawaii, his doctor having assured him he will be fit to work after four weeks rest.

The break-up of his marriage is, of course, only the latest in a series of crises and near-disasters that have plagued Gaye's existence in recent years. Indeed, his last studio album, 'Here, My Dear,' was released to ward off an impending bankruptcy, the result of Gaye's failure to pay alimony to Anna, his first wife. Consequently, all royalties from the album were paid direct to her, the sister of Motown founder Berry Gordy and the woman through whom Gaye first entered the music business.

In a press statement issued by Motown announcing the postponement of the tour, Gaye said: "I'm very sorry to have disappointed everyone. I've got fond memories of my visits to Britain and of the warm reception I've been given there. As far as I'm concerned the tour has not been cancelled. It's been postponed, and I'll be over there as soon as I'm fit."

CHRIS SALEWICZ

THRILLS

Decca Bites The Dust

DECCA, the electronics company and formerly successful record company, are about to diversify their ailing financial fortunes via the takeover bid. The firm's role as a major hardware industry, specialising in navigation and radar will be absorbed into a company called Racal, but their records outlet has been bought up by PolyGram for a probable £23 million.

The label that once turned down The Beatles is only a viable proposition to potential buyers *without* its record interests, these had become a huge loss maker throughout the '70s.

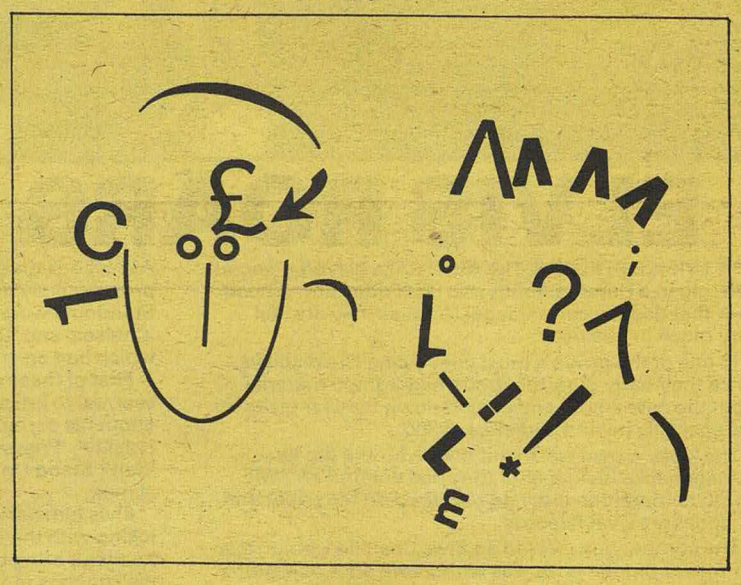
Sir Edward Lewis, Decca's 79 year old boss, floated the company during the middle of Britain's first depression at a time when "We had chaps in here with bowler hats on, ready to cut our telephone wires" (believed to be a reference to little known hot jazz combo The Sax Pistols). Now, with the current economic climate reminiscent of the roaring twenties, Decca have long been incapable of keeping up with the course of events and fashion. Their sole excursions into the phenomenon psychologists are calling the 'new wave' seemed to be a flurry of signings centred around Slaughter and the Dogs and Mr John Miles. It transpires that not even the fifty third re-release of The Moodies' controversial gay paen 'Nights In White Satin' can save Decca's table in the rock and roll marketplace.

MAX BELL

THRILLS

Cartoon Comp Special

by Chris Kennedy, of Wallasey



"The drum machine wants a solo."

DANGEROUS VISIONS

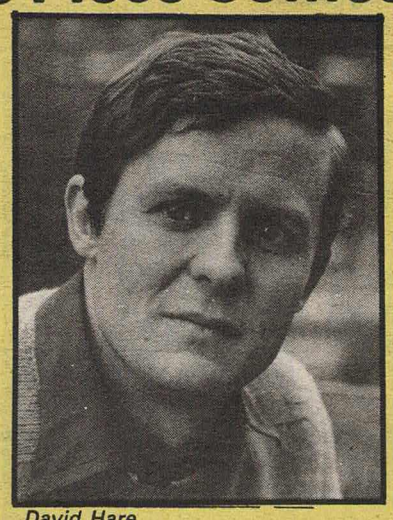
New Hare Piece Comes Unstuck

WE ARE accustomed, with a few notable exceptions, to have television regulate what is thinkable (and visual) about sexuality in a programmatic — pun intended — rather than problematic manner; mostly closures around innuendo.

Dreams of Leaving was an attempt, said David Hare, to put "something interesting about sex on TV", and as such it was — paradoxically? — fittingly anti-climatic. But it wasn't disappointing because of any 'narrowness' of play, a charge Hare said he expected in respect of the difference from his more generally 'political' past work. Rather, it came across as a *potentially* successful and *personally* political sketch for a finished project.

As a televisual representation of a sexual affair it *was* more than interesting, at least in theory. The mutual interest of the two partner-characters in question is never consummated; the narrative concentrates instead on shifting relations between sexuality, subjectivity and power.

William (Bill Nighy) is a young journalist who, in 1971, comes to London from the North; he meets the arty, professionally promiscuous Caroline (Kate Nelligan) and is caught: moth and flame, etc. So far, so fair. Hare had commented that *Dreams* did 'differ' from past analyses in as much as it involved a narrowing of sights onto one specific relationship, as opposed to one focussed within a wider, crucial social setting — as in the excellent *Licking Hitler* of two years ago, which dealt with wartine propoganda, or *Plenty*, with the myth of post-war British smiles.



David Hare

Dreams of Leaving did, however, seem to be sticking a few poison pens in our recently deceased Seventies, and interestingly intertwining sexual playacting with closed roles on the shopfloor: art galleries and Fleet St. offices, rock'n'roll parties and boozy press conferences where nobody is ethically 'at home' with either their own or any other self's life style. It could have been a purposeful little epitaph — the Seventies, after all, didn't even leave a residue of a 'swinging' myth — similar in vein to Chris Petit's *Radio On*, where the facade of staying in control, of acting like you're getting your 'satisfaction' even if it isn't so, is all that matters — despite any "dreams of leaving". (Leaving a dull decade . . .?)

But it was precisely that kind of 'either/or' logic which ruined *Dreams of Leaving*. The 'affair' could only ever be true *or* false: no middleground — as though the characters were subjects *of* desire rather than involved *in* its processes. And if this was the metaphor Hare intended to mark . . . he didn't make it at all obvious.

The dialogue between William and Caroline — together *and* apart — was cliche written large and stilted, never more than one-dimensionally representational, never living up to its symbolic premise. If each sex stated its intentions, their position in relation to each other remained unchallenged, the reasons for their rigidity and romantic hysteria unclear.

Caroline simply 'goes insane'. William 'simply' gets married.

I simply think that David Hare didn't know what he had to say about sexuality other than it was time TV said something about it.

IAN PENMAN

Lowry

Not only Rock'n'Roll

LISTEN! HAVE YOU HEARD THIS GREAT NEW ALBUM BY THE POST-MODERNIST FOR CHRISTMAS, ALIENATED YOUNG MEN WITH DODGY HAIRCUTS AND AN ARTS COUNCIL GRANT?
SEARCH ME
YOU GODDAM IMBECILE!!! THE SPECTRE OF AN IMPENDING NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST HAUNTS MY EVERY WAKING HOUR AND YOU THINK I'VE TIME FOR TRIVIA!!
THE RED ARMY'S MASSING JUST OVER THE CHANNEL - THE SKIES WILL SOON BE DARK WITH MISSILES!! IT'S ARMAGIDEON TIME!!
SNAP CRUNDLE
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO LISTEN TO SOME WIMPS FROM WALLASEY WITH ANGST AND ACNE!!
AT A TIME LIKE THIS THE ONLY REALISTIC COURSE IS TO GET IN PLENTY OF HOURS ON THE OLD ACOUSTIC FOR THE NEW GOLDEN AGE OF THE PROTEST SINGER!!!
HAIR GROWING
SNARL!! DOWN YOU MASTERS OF WAR!!
THIS MACHINE SUCKS

More Macca

From page 11

the crowds of protesting Wings' fans who've been warbling 'Yesterday' outside his prison cell, it's hard to guage whether or not the majority sympathise with this attitude.

For McCartney to get busted is certainly open to a fair amount of conjecture. Seeing as he's reputed to gross upwards of £20 million a year, he could well afford the standard megastar practice of paying a carrier to run his drugs through customs.

There's always the possibility that the dope was planted but that seems unlikely in the light of both Macca and Linda's previous convictions — Sweden, '72: for possession (after which he announced publically: "We smoke grass, and we like it. I'll go on smoking it as soon as I can get some more."); Mull Of Kintyre, '72: for growing marijuana; Los Angeles, '75: when Linda was obliged to attend a rehabilitation centre after being found in possession of enough weed for four joints — and his alleged comment to customs officials that "I bought some hemp for me smoking", adding "mistake . . . serious mistake".

The three possible explanations for what seems to be an exceptionally foolish move on Paulie's part are that either he assumed that his status in Japan would grant him preferential treatment, or that he was hoping to effect something of a double bluff (a search being so inevitable that they wouldn't bother), or that — slim chance, this — he was attempting some valiant and martyrish stand on behalf of the world-wide welfare of the Legalise Cannabis Campaign, an organization to which, along with the rest of the Beatles, he leant meagre support in '67, but whose approaches he has since ignored.

At present there's very little news about his well-being. Macca's pressman Tony Briansby told *Thrills* he was "a bit upset", a condition that's hardly improved since the prison officers refused to allow him a guitar (or any dope) in his cell.

Linda McCartney is somewhat less reserved. Referring to the Jap customs officials, she told press: "As soon as they get someone nice like Paul they seem to make a field day of it. I'll never come back to Japan again. It's my first trip *and* my last."

MARK ELLEN

THRILLS

Presley/Rondstadt Duet?!

WHEN, last year, an enterprising American d-j began saturating the airwaves with a remarkable electronically souped-up tape which combined both the Elvis Presley and Linda Rondstadt recordings of 'Love Me Tender,' demand for the commercial release of this gimmick was enormous. For whatever reasons, RCA and Asylum may not have reached an agreement to put this 'production' on sale, but that hasn't prevented a single containing both mono and stereo versions circulating in sizeable quantities. Please don't write and ask where it can be purchased, Our copy came through the auspices of a Good Fairy!

KEN DARBY

Dope international

IN EARLY February Amsterdam will stage the First International Cannabis Legalisation Conference. A wide variety of lawyers, doctors, writers, researchers, and activists from as far apart as Japan, Colombia, New Zealand, the United States and Europe will be holding a series of workshops and discussions, providing valuable feedback and an international perspective.

The conference organisers are The International Cannabis Alliance of Reform (ICAR), an alliance of legalisation organisations around the world. Established in 1978, ICAR's aim is simple and direct — to remove cannabis from the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. This is the international treaty that forbids governments from legalising public production, distribution and sale of cannabis.

Much new information is likely to be generated by such an event, and *NME* will be carrying a full report.

REGULAR readers may remember this writer's coverage of the real story behind the movie *Midnight Express* and the whole question about the plight of prisoners in foreign jails. At that time there was no specific organisation concerned with the problem as Amnesty International refused to accept drug prisoners under its charter.

This situation has now been remedied by the establishment of the National Council for the Welfare of Prisoners Abroad, which for some time now has been providing money, legal aid, even emotional support to hundreds of British prisoners in jail abroad. Other countries have transfer arrangements so that prisoners can serve out their time in their home country. Agreement on this subject was reached by the Council of Europe in both 1966 and 1974, but Britain has yet to ratify these treaties or make a single transfer arrangement.

It may be a widely held view that people in jail abroad have committed a crime and therefore deserve what they get, but as the Howard League for Penal Reform point out in their report on the subject: "Punishment is increased by being served in a foreign land and this is neither just nor humane."

NCWPA can be contacted c/o 1 Elgin Avenue, London W9 3PR.

McDONALD's Corporation, the hamburger kings, have agreed to redesign their small white plastic coffee stirrers because of complaints by Joyce Nalpeka of Silver Springs. Maryland, that it can be used to snort cocaine.

Joyce gave evidence before a congressional committee that "a coffee-stirring spoon from our All-American McDonald's" is a common item of drug paraphernalia.

CURRENTLY in court in Miami is 'Brother Love' the leader of Florida's Zion Coptic Church who claim the smoking of the herb as a sacrament. The church, which was featured on a recent *Miami Circuit Five* TV programme, is largely white but its beliefs are not dissimilar to those of the Rastafarian faith. They have their HQ in Jamaica and there have been allegations of smuggling. Certainly the church is not short of funds. Brother Love will defend the church's use of marijuana by claiming protection under the First Amendment and he has hired Ramsey Clark, Lyndon Johnson's former Attorney General, to put the case for him. They may be banking on the fact that there is a legal precedent. Members of the Native American Church are allowed to use peyote in their rituals.

FOR THE record, the latest drug crime statistics from the States make interesting reading. The FBI claim that in 1978 445,800 people were busted for marijuana violations, a figure close to the highest ever. Even more significantly, 87 per cent of these were for simple possession and, nationwide, they accounted for an average 75 per cent of all drug arrests.

Still, those figures may well go down as it appears the US is currently suffering a marijuana shortage as a result of two events.

First the Colombian crop, a major source of the US supply, has been badly damaged by heavy rainstorms throughout the growing season, which have also destroyed roads and airstrips.

Secondly, because of the American concern over the discovery of a Russian military brigade in Cuba, the area around the Florida coast has been seething with Navy cruisers patrolling the area. Normally, a centre for large marine drug smuggling operations, even the most successful dealers are now lying low until the coast is clear.

INSIDE DOPE

By DICK TRACY

The Beach Boys

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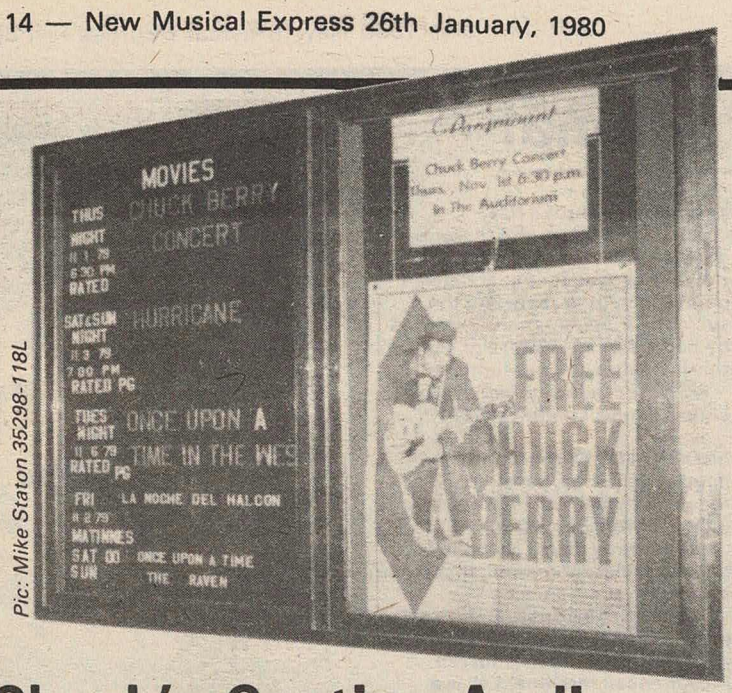

Pic: Mike Staton 35298-118L

Chuck's Captive Audience

CHUCK BERRY was released from Lompoc Prison Farm on November 19, 1979, after serving two-thirds of his four-month jail sentence for income tax evasion. Whilst down on the farm, Berry gave his fellow inmates a secret concert. New York's *Trouser Press* commissioned this special report from prisoner No. 00214-122L.

LOMPOC, California is probably best remembered, if at all, as the location of W C Field's 'The Bank Dick'. Bit it is also the home of Lompoc Federal Penitentiary, a maximum security prison with seven layers of razor wire on a double fence, and five gun towers; an inmate was shot and killed in an escape attempt several months ago. Chuck Berry was not assigned here but to Lompoc Prison Farm, a separate and much less severe institution.

As soon as Berry's sentence became known — even before he arrived in Lompoc Penitentiary — some prisoners, including myself, began asking the recreation department about the possibility of his putting on a show.

After Berry started borrowing the pen's musical equipment to play shows at the Farm, rec department officials themselves put pressure on higher-ups. A date was set: November 1, 6.30 pm. Berry forbade cameras. A poster calling for his liberation did double duty as advertising for the "free" concert.

Five hundred convicts jammed the auditorium as concert hour rolled around. The lights were turned down very low (to make sure no photos would be taken?) and Berry, accompanied by his band of felons from camp, came on stage. He started off with a rousing 'Roll Over, Beethoven' and kept the pace up during a 75-minute set. The band was at varying levels of proficiency, so it was almost like watching Berry play solo. As might be expected, oldies dominated: when I called out for something off his latest LP, 'Rockit', Berry expressed surprise that anyone had heard it, as the album came out a month before he entered prison.

Apart from songs, Berry told a few jokes in the form of a letter he had received from a woman friend. She wrote that she would have enclosed some money for him but didn't think about it until after she had sealed the envelope. The auditorium cracked up; we've all had equally lame excuses foisted on us at one time or another.

SHANE WILLIAMS
Lompoc Federal Penitentiary
Lompoc, CA.

Win these unique repackagings

STATESIDE, A&M Records Special Products team have been repackaging recent recordings by Joe Jackson, The Police and Squeeze in the strangest manner.

For instance, they've taken Joe Jackson's current long-player 'I'm The Man' and transformed it into what they call 'The 7-Inch Album' — a boxed set of all ten album tracks split into five individually pic-sleeved singles and as a bonus, this limited edition release comes with a poster. Another limited edition release concerns The Police's 'Regatta De Blanc'. Why be content with a regular 12-inch copy when it's available as a two 10-inch package with a poster? Finally, six international Squeeze hits have been pressed onto one 10-inch platter and packaged in a nifty sculptured sleeve.

With our usual light-fingered finesse, we here at *NME* have come into the possession of five complete sets of all three limited edition packages. Instead of splitting them up we've decided to offer these sets to the first five all-correct winners of this week's competition. Study each question carefully and then write the appropriate letter (A, B, C or D) in the seven boxes provided on the official entry coupon. As a tie-breaker, suggest a title for a new Police album.

(1) Which one of the following solo artists recently issued their debut album in the States as a limited edition two 10-inch record package?
(a) Tom Verlaine (b) Joe Jackson (c) Meatloaf (d) Sid Vicious

(2) A hit single for Squeeze, 'Cool For Cats' was originally the title of?
(a) air-conditioned earth shoes (b) a brand of mentholated cigarettes (c) a TV show (d) a feline spray deodorant

(3) The Police were once the backing group for which US singer?
(a) Cherry Vanilla (b) Wayne County (c) Ellen Foley (d) Niagara

(4) Which one of the following artists *hasn't* recorded a song entitled, 'Bang Bang'?
(a) Cher (b) Motorhead (c) Squeeze (d) B. A. Robertson

(5) The correct spelling of the title of the first Police album is?
(a) Outlandas D'Amour (b) Orlando D'Amour (c) Outlander D'Amoure (d) Outlandos D'Amour

(6) The title of a Squeeze single, 'Up The Junction' was first a TV dramatization of a Nell Dunn story before it was made into a movie. Which British group recorded the movie soundtrack?
(a) Manfred Mann (b) The Yardbirds (c) Hermans's Hermits (d) The Bee Gees

(7) The white pointed, side-lacing shoes that Joe Jackson wore for the cover of his 'Look Sharp' debut album came from which High Street shoe company?
(a) Dolcis (b) Saxone (c) Denson (d) Clarks

Rules: This competition is open to all readers resident in the UK, Eire, Isle Of Man and the Channel Islands, except employees (and their families) of IPC Magazines Ltd., the printers of New Musical Express and the staff of A&M Records. The Editor's decision is final and the result will be published in a future edition of NME.

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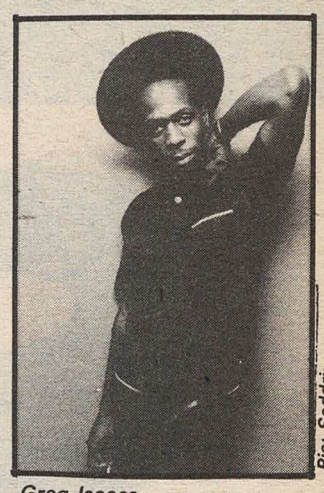

Pic: Saddri

Greg Isaacs throws pose for '80s

A NEW decade? A new deaf-aid might be more useful, so that this cloth-eared reviewer can make out what's going on. Mind you, with reggae standing about waiting for the Millenium, there's little chance a detail like the end of the '70s will make any appreciable difference to the music, although there are signs that something is afoot.

Listen to the drumming on **Gregory Isaacs' 'Poor And Clean' (African Museum),** a sort of hybrid of the rockers and one-drop styles which lifts the record clear of the well-worn rut it could otherwise fall into. Gregory has some claim to the title of Quintessential Reggae Singer of the '70s, with all the good and bad things that implies; while his singing is up to scratch here, the lyric isn't as original as you'd hope.

Nearly everyone else seems happy playing around with their old rhythms: nothing like looking to the future, is there? **Junior Delgado** dusts off his two-year-old 'Tish'an' tape to give it another bash on **'Jah Says' (Incredible Jux),** which is quite bearable without managing to improve on the first cut. The sparse rhythm is well handled on the dub, 'Kidnap On The Subway', a strange effort; basically a solo for trumpet, with a hint of echo for that subway sound.

One of reggae's abiding mysteries is the identity of King Medious, who in 1972 cut the excellent 'This World' for Upsetter; composer credits went to 'M. Henry', and when Augustus Pablo's version, 'Hot And Cold', appeared, the ripple of interest in Henry/Medious spread. Now, without quite clearing up the enigma, things are taken further with **Milton Henry's 'Follow Fashion' (International Globe),** which uses the rhythm of 'This World'/'Hot And Cold', while the song (are you still with me?) is virtually a rewrite of 'TW'. If the new record is less striking than the earlier pair, it does alright for itself. Flute and organ provide evocative support for the vocal. **Pablo** himself has also been digging around amongst his old tapes, and emerges with a 1979 version of 'Lover's Mood' now known as **'Rockers' Mood' (Rockers Int'l).** The melodica is unusually hesitant for our Augustus, and a general lack of vim and vigour mars the proceedings.

Onto Studio One discomixes: **Prince Jazzbo's 'Crabwalking',** is a worthwhile and only marginally modernised reissue of his classic toast to Horace Andy's 'Skylarking'. I don't own the original so I'm happy to make do with this for now; Jazzbo's advice is *"don't you try to skylark, I beg you, skylark if offends dem law"* — there's nothing I enjoy as much as a bit of skylarking about, but I suppose it'll have to stop now. Studio One's highlight of the moment has to be **Carlton And The Shoes' 'Let Me Love You'**: harmony singing is never any sweeter than the Shoes', Carlton Manning shows he's as good as ever, and the Brentford Road rhythm section is in good working order.

If **The Jewels' 'Dream Lover Babe' (Cash And Carry)** had been made in New York in 1961, it would probably fall into Penny Reel's 'Superpop' category; as it is, it's lovers' rock, Kingston style, which means it's less syrupy than its UK equivalent. Records like this don't do very well in Jamaica, but as long as it sells over here, the Jewels will keep putting them out over there, and I'll not complain.

More in tune with the JA mood is **Judah's 'Take Over The Town' (Truths And Rights),** A Marley-ish record which achieves the sort of uncluttered sound that no longer seems to interest Marley himself. Judah lacks Bob's gift of the philosophical gab, but some irreverent Punch-and-Judy laughter diverts attention from the lyric without somehow fitting the mood of the record. **Dennis Brown's 'Want To Be No General' (DEB Music)** shows how to make a record when you can't think of anything to sing about, thanks to Dennis's vocal mannerisms, which just keep the record from falling off the edge.

Sufferers Heights and its subsidiary Cruise established themselves in 1979 as the most promising new reggae labels, and look well set for the future; **Rod Taylor's 'Behold Him' (Sufferers Heights, 12")** is one of the best Mikey Dread productions so far, and with two outrageous dub cuts to follow the vocal, plus Rod's 'His Imperial Majesty' on the other side, you certainly get value for money. **The Private I's 'I'll Be Around (Cruise, 12")** was produced and mixed by reggae critic and Memory Man, Chris Lane. The Detroit Spinners' song was first done in reggae at Studio One by Otis Gayle, but Lane knows better than simply to mimic Coxsone Dodd. Instead, the song is taken at a faster tempo, while a sax follows the vocal and then takes a classy solo through the dub section.

Mr DJ: NICK KIMBERLEY

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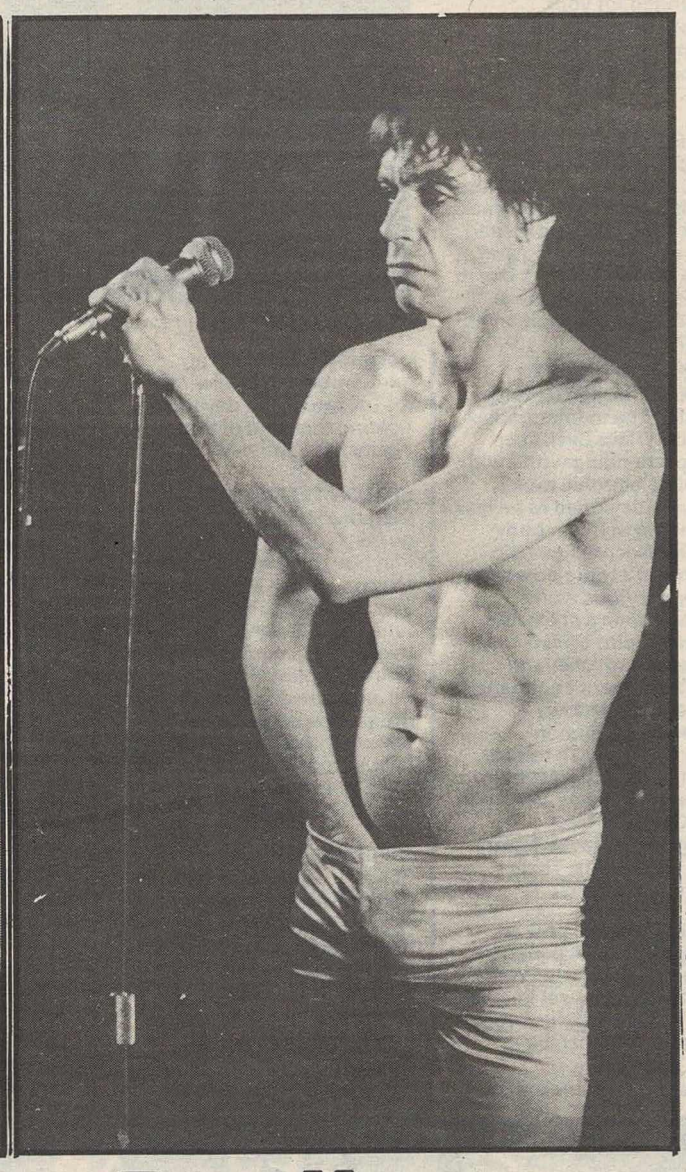
SINGLES

Skafish . Pic: Mykel Board



Pop. Pic: Calude Gassian

Is She Really Going Out With Him?

These Are The Modern Worlds

By Charles Shaar Murray

■ GEEK OF THE WEEK

SKAFISH: Disgracing The Family Name (Illegal). There wasn't a single of the week until this slab of rhythmic petulance oozed into the room and there still isn't, but Jim Skafish has evidently led such a thoroughly miserable life that one feels obliged to do whatever is within one's power to improve his lot. Imagine! He has no friends, no father-figure (probably just as well — you know what *that* leads to), a domineering mother, breasts (all very well in their place, but embarrassing on a chap) . . . this man's life has been hell, and now he's passing a little of it on to you.

'Disgracing The Family Name' shows Skafish's uniquely irritating voice off to fine advantage, complete with lackadaisical chording on a cheap electric organ, a beat that goes 'chug' rather a lot and a lyric that pretends not to be self-pitying but actually is (actually). A supremely annoying record that would make marvellous radio, and made by the person least likely to become the next Debbie Harry.

Hear him whine!

"Grandmother built respect for family name/my father worked to keep it just the same/my mother once was proud of family name . . . I'm disgracing the family name (yeh-yeh-yeh-yeh)/debasing the family name/How are the old folks at home?/Oh, they hang their heads in shame . . ."

As well they might. The only question is: how can you possibly disgrace a name like Skafish? By the way, Skafish has the same manager as Muddy Waters. FACT.

■ EH IT'S NICE TO 'EAR AN OLD SONG INT IT

NEW ADVENTURES: Come On (WEA). Not exactly a record that crushes musical boundaries and traditions into dust, but New Adventures' reading of Chuckleberry's chestnut is a pleasing up-ending of an old standard even though it is not startlingly dissimilar to the version which Uncle Joe Jackson sometimes uses for his encore. Bass-driven and amusingly diagonal, New Adventures turn the song upside down, shake it a few times until everything not directly essential falls out and then wave the result about in an appealingly energetic manner. It'd be nice if Berry himself would apply the same consideration to his ancient repertoire. This could slide into daytime radio programming like a warm knife through butter.

■ HE'S SO M-M-MODERN

JOHN FOXX: Underpass (Metal Beat). It must be a heavy cross for old John to bear, knowing that he was Gary Numan's chief inspiration. So, as befits an Olde Master returning to receive his rightful due from the world, he reappears on his own Virgin-backed label with a synthy extravagance that cops Bowie's 'Low' noises even more worshipfully than Gary himself. Curious vision of the world these people have. It must be hard being an alienated robot lost in a world of hi-tech when buying the milk or going to the toilet. God, everything's happening at once these days. I can't wait to hear Bowie's next set of licks and find out who's going to make a career out of them.

■ A LITTLE SHOT OF RHYTHM & BLUES (with a little rhythm & blues on the side)

THE COMMUTERS: The Commuters' Restaurant Buffet And Bar EP (Lone). A three-track EP of thrashing, wailing UK R&B lacking the technique, flair and style of 9 Below Zero or the casual sharpness of Lew Lewis but rampaging along with a single-minded energy that brings a grin to the lips and a beat to the feet. The A-side 'Small Talk' bashes along with some completely berserk harp and a guitar/bass/drums verve that virtually swamps the singer, who is revealed with slightly more clarity than would be to his advantage over on the other side where all the other Mott loyalists can locate a version of 'Angeline' that someone should give to Kris Needs for his next 21st birthday. Whoever designed the label could undoubtedly earn more money working for Stiff Records' art department. Available from 16 Carlton Court, Harpenden (how's that for R&B credibility?), Herts.

MATCHBOX: Buzz Buzz A Diddle It (Magnet). Matchbox are — as anyone who ever stitched a Confederate flag to the back of his donkey jacket could tell you — a rockabilly band, but here they take an old Freddy Cannon number (aren't they all?) and kit it out with rubbery Bo Diddley guitar and a few drops of mouth harp, making a seriously exuberant noise in the process. Incidentally, someone in Magnet's A&R Department must be well into Freddy Cannon, as a version of the maestro's 'Palisades Park' by some unnatural phenomenon calling itself Cyclone surfaces on the same label this week. Already playing on your radio, soon to be olaying in your heart.

ANIMALS AND MEN: Don't Misbehave In The New Age (TW). An incongruous but delightfully logical place to find more honking harp is in strategic areas of an austere, monochrome sort of grim warning from Animals And Men, when Susan Wells lectures the listener in a manner not unlike that of Pauline Murray. Ralph Mitchard, who operates guitar as well as the harp in question, isn't exactly the next Paul Butterfield (probably wouldn't want to be), but earns some sort of award for Unusual Use Of A Standard Noise In an Unexpected Context (of the week). Available from Andil House, Court St., Trowbridge, Wilts.

■ SILLIEST RECORD OF THE WEEK

QUARTZ: Nantucket Sleighride (Theme From *Weekend World*) (Reddington's Rare Records). Quite why anyone — especially a heavy metal band from Brum — would want to record a note-perfect copy of Mountain's incredibly boring ode to the heroic joys of hunting sperm whales, is a matter of purest conjecture. However, connoisseurs of the bizarre and pointless will be happy to know that it actually has been done. Who can deny that we live in a most wonderful world? Evidence of the actual existence of this object can be obtained from the band at 12, 14, 16 and 20 Moor St., Queensway, Birmingham B4 7UH (they've actually etched their address into the label) or by phone at 021-643-2017 (I don't know why I'm telling you this).

■ ACTUALLY, MAN, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN REALLY INTO SKA

THE OUTLINE: I Like Blue Beat (Hansa). How amazing. All these people who really *really* love ska but somehow never got round to telling us about until someone in the industry realised how heavily 2-Tone were cleaning up. Out of all this week's ersatz ska records, this is easily the worst. As for the rest . . .

999: Trouble (Polydor). Famous punk-rock band 999 — showcased to such telling effect on *Old Grey Whistle Test's Pick Of The Year* with celebrated song 'Homicide' — commence some gently but kicky skanking with one guitar playing a bruising metal riff and the other flicking gently in the background while a cheap organ hums to itself. Mildly nice, but not exactly a heavy duty dancing situation.

THE AKRYLYKZ: Spiderman (Double R). A heavily Specialised item with horns doing what they should and enthusiastic toasting, it could just about hit if someone with money gets behind it NOW (in six weeks it'll be too late). A hyperactive gent named Stevie B is involved with sax, keyboards, vocals and sleeve design, by the way. Any relation to the guitarist with Tom's Sector 27? *(Doubt it. — Ed.)* Available from Red Rhino, 9 Gillygate, York, and recorded at Cargo Studios in Rochdale.

THE SAME: Movements (Blueprint). A record to listen to while running on the spot. Scoring highly for melody and rhythm, it loses points for an extremely boring production and a vocal performance that isn't . . . quite . . . good . . . enough. A remix might help.

ROCKERS EXPRESS: Phoenix City (Koriva). After *you*, Alphonso. Great tune not getting any greater for being subjected to all this.

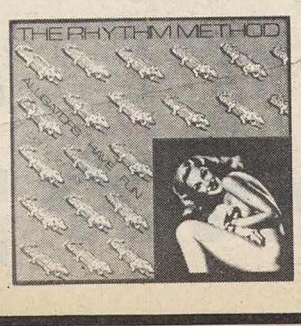
THE REGULARS: Don't Stay Out Late (CBS). Red green and gold t'ing to one side. The Regulars dip into the ska bag and come out with Kentrick Patrick's 'Don't Stay Out Late' on one side and Coxsone Dodd's 'Rude Boy Gone Jail' on the other. Expert and calming where most of the others attempt to rouse and fail, but it's maybe a touch too soporific for comfort.

TOOTS AND THE MAYTALS: Chatty Chatty (Island). Aaahhhhhh . . . . Toots. Nobody does it better, which is why 'Chatty Chatty' cooks up the best groove in its league. Fresh from their non-appearance on the Clash's tour — someone's being a cheapskate here — the band kick into the beat with a lurch and a grin and Toots does his soulful thing over the top in pure championship style. To be heard, seen.

■ ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN

THE JAGS: Woman's World (Island). One doesn't wish to be nasty to The Jags, since they lent me an AC30 once when I needed it desperately, but . . . you remember all that stuff about how 'Back Of My Hand' wasn't meant to sound like Elvis Costello at all and the whole thing was a ghastly accident? Don't look now, but it's happened again. To sound like Elvis once is merely bad

■ *Continues over*



SINGLES

■ *From previous page*

luck, but to do it twice is — in the words of Lady Bracknell — sheer carelessness.

■ ***AND ONCE MORE INTO THE BREACH . . .***

SUE CUSS: You Really Got Me (Orchid). Oh yes . . . hmmm . . . the biggest female rock event of the last few months started off with a cover of a track off the very first Kinks album, so why don't we . . . do a kind of early Quatro-style version of . . . not a bad idea at all that . . . hmmmmm.

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS: At The Edge (Chrysalis). A bunch of well-meant and well-performed noise from the Credible Ones, with Jake Burns ripping his throat out with commendable lack of concern for his health. However, the song doesn't seem to deserve all that energy. Anger isn't enough.

IGGY POP: Loco Mosquito (Arista). Oh God, what's the old fool up to now? He starts off crazily intoning the opening lines of Shirley Ellis' 'Clapping Song' accompanied by a lonely pipe organ and then the band kicks into . . . yes, it's that catchy West Indian shuffle beat! Chord changes like 'Come On' and a load of old Del Shannon devices checked in for good measure. Craziness isn't enough, either.

THE RHYTHM METHOD: Alligators Have Fun (Rhythm). So, it would appear, do The Rhythm Method. Led by Busta Cherry Jones, a man chiefly distinguished for beating Tom Robinson to the Sharks bass chair vacated by Andy Fraser, this is studio fun for dancers, and could well benefit from becoming yet another release on the UK singles market. The backward guitar is especially commended for your attention. Available from Rhythm Records, 249 West 16th St., 5c, New York City 10011.

BARDI BLASIE: Trans Siberian Express (Dindisc). Lene Lovich, this is your style. The B-side is a blank backing track against which you are invited to tape yourself singing and send to Dindisc to win a day in the studio. What will these record company people think of next?

MARTIN O'CUTHBERT: Navigator Through Nowhere (Esoteric). The indefatigable O'Cuthbert flails back at an uncomprehending world with more DIY electronic music apparently designed to be less entertaining than anybody else's DIY electronic music. "Not only is it more accessible than my previous works," writes Martin in a shaky but determined biro scrawl, "but it is deeper and fuller and evokes a dormant engimatic corner of the shadowy recesses of the human psyche." If you wish this to happen to you, contact Martin at 33 Barbery House, Shannon Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham. (Maybe Martin should join Quartz. This month's Wakefield?)

INNER CITY UNIT: Solitary Ashtray (Riddle). A paean to noted architect Astrid Proll, Inner City Limit invest heavily in neo-'50s teen-absurd vocals and dementedly catchy chorus against the hammering riddems and odd noises. Nik Turner is an ex-member of Hawkwind, but it's too late in the day to start holding that kind of thing against anybody.

". . . so I said 'They ain't water wings, Buddy'. . ." Bette Midler in casual pose. Pic: Paul Canty

SILICON TEENS: Judy In Disguise (Mute). Lemme guess. A John Fred And His Playboy Band revival? Silly old song given a rousingly silly studio fun treatment, funny and danceable. Everything's coming up radio. Will hit, if played. Mute Records are distributed by Rough Trade but more personal communication can be entered into at 16 Decoy Avenue (is this a joke or what?), London NW11.

BRAINIAC 5: Working (Roche). A brief hit of PiL-ish noises with jews harp and Human League vocals before a punk band come in and start playing a little song about daily labours. Appealing in a small way.

THE BUGGLES: The Plastic Age (Island). Number One hit wonders leap to the forefront of public consciousness once again, this time with an intriguing ditty in the best electropop vein, garnished with Paulie vocals and rhythms. If we're living in the plastic age, then this record is part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

BETTE MIDLER: When A Man Loves A Woman (Atlantic). In which The Dreadful Ms M and her audience — for this was, in fact, recorded in the presence of one of those ones — stop congratulating each other for just long enough for Bette to sing various bits of the Percy Sludge classic which was such an integral part of many people's love lives in 1967.

SHAZAM: Ooh-Sh-La-Lady (Criminal). Starts out sounding just like Iggy's 'Sister Midnight'. (Un)fortunately the resemblance ends there. Pity the record doth not likewise.

BARBRA STREISAND: I Ain't Gonna Cry Tonight (CBS). Barbra Streisand is just so-o-o-o-o faaaabulous. Everything she sings ends up sounding just like a hollow nightclub melodrama, and singers like that really do something to me. On this record, she effortlessly swamps an Amii Stewart-type backing-track with the kind of personality that really *lights up a room*, y'know?

IAN McLAGAN: La De Da (Mercury). Listen, Mac. You've gotta good job with the Stones and you play with the New Barbs whenever they do their stuff, right? So don't go stronging it and making solo albums with attendant singles. Keef 'n Ron 'n Stanley 'n Ringo are all on the album making their usual noises, but I bet it'll sell even less than 'Gimme Some Neck'.

MICK JACKSON: You Don't Light My Fire (CBS). You're not going to blame *that* on the boogie as well, are you?

RICKIE LEE JONES: Easy Money (Warner Bros). Standin' on the corner, draggin' on a butt in one of those timeless hot American smalltown sidewalk evenings, Rickie Lee allows the lyric to dribble like smoke out of the corner of her mouth and then sashays off. A TV programme in which nothing happens but people lean across the tables to make their point.

DUSTY SPRINGFIELD: Your Love Still Brings Me To My Knees (Mercury). When I was but a lad I always thought pop stars knew what they were doing. Records like this, where excellent singers go with duff songs and characterless settings simply because they can't think of what else to do, tend to disapprove of this argument. Part of being a great singer is knowing what to sing. *That* part of *this* great singer is out to lunch. Which reminds me . . .

■ ***TREAT OF THE WEEK***

ANNETTE PEACOCK: Love's Out To Lunch (Aura). As sweet and savvy a piece of sensual whimsy as you're likely to hear for a week of Sundays, 'Love's Out To Lunch' is the perfect release to counterpoint the waves of techno-alienation currently posing all over the landscape. Framed in a mentholated jazz-funk setting, Annette gently chides the emotional climate *("Love on the run's oft called fun/getting social diseases from anyone/who turns you on/then turns you in/then turns you out . . .")* and asks the vital question *"What's happened to love?/Nobody gets it on any more."* Clears the palate delightfully after a heavy meal; the perfect dessert.

NEXT WEEK IN NME CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY MEETS THE RAMONES 2-3-4

RUDE GIRLS AND DIRTY PHONE CALLS

Adrian Thrills tries to get himself abducted by The Bodysnatchers

SNOW is falling all around. Seven o'clock and the roads are blocked in Camden Town. Huddled around a large table in a street corner alehouse, sipping orange ★★ juice and poring over a list of tour dates, sit a motley gaggle of musicians.

They have made even fewer live appearances than PiL, though in the space of just 12 smalltime gigs in London and one fourth-on-the-bill support slot at the Lyceum they have created a considerable stir.

Seven-piece, rock steady orientated and — perhaps more importantly for the avaricious A&R men — all-female, they call themselves The Bodysnatchers. And they are hotly rumoured to be the latest band hunched at the starting grid on the 2-Tone trail to superskadom.

As far as 'treading the boards' goes, The Bodysnatchers are still a little wet behind the ears. The rhythm section as yet has none of the zip or dexterity their chosen rock steady genre demands. But they are learning at an alarming rate and in singer Rhoda they have a vocalist with the character and exuberance to divert attention away from their occasional musical deficiencies.

Whereas The Specials have taken their musical cue from Prince Buster and The Skatalites, The Bodysnatchers have plumped for the more mellow, mid-tempo sway of the Jamaican music of the mid to late '60s — the rock steady sound that was to evolve into the skinhead reggae of the turn of the decade.

When they played their debut gig at the end of November, their set consisted almost entirely of cover versions, and pretty predictable cover versions at that, from Desmond Dekker's '007' to Dave And Ansel Collins' two early '70s hits 'Double Barrel' and 'Monkey Spanner'. Now the set boasts no fewer than six self-penned efforts.

Unsurprisingly, the band who sparked off the idea of an all-girl rock steady combo for bass player andfounder member Nicky was The Specials, as she readily admits. But she is also adamant that The Bodysnatchers are no bandwagon jumpers.

"I tried to get a band started about a year ago, but nothing ever happened. But then I saw The Specials last April when they were playing places like the Moonlight Club and Hope And Anchor. Everybody who went there was dancing. Nobody fought or posed or stared at each other.

"It was just that everybody enjoyed it. If you go to a gig, no matter how good it is, you don't get as much out of it if you just stand there. Even if a band is lousy, or just not very competent like us, you'll still get more out of seeing someone like us 'cause you'll be dancing."

Nicky's original attempts to start the group met with only limited success. An *NME* ad — "Rude Girls Wanted To Form Band" — brought only three months of dirty phone calls, though by September she had located drummer Jane, guitarists Stella and SJ, saxophonist Miranda and organist Pennie.

The final all-important recruitment was that of Rhoda, black and Brixton born-and-bred, whom she bumped into at a Selecter gig.

"She was the last to join. I just saw her image and everything and thought 'God! I've never seen anything like it'. I just went up to her and asked her if she could sing. She said Yeah and came down to the next rehearsal and that was that."

From the outset Nicky, the only member with any previous musical experience, was determined that The Bodysnatchers would be an all-girl group.

"I just wanted a band that would get on. Apart from The Slits and a few heavy metal bands, which are a different line of music, there haven't been that many all-girl bands who have really made an impression. It might have been easier to get a mixed band together but there are a lot of other complications."

Guitarist Stella puts the deliberate all-girl approach down to the fact that band auditions would be more likely to yield musicians of a comparable — i.e. limited — standard.

"Someone like Miranda would never have answered an ad just asking for musicians of either sex. Mostly, girls won't answer those kinds of ads 'cause a lot of them are inexperienced."

And what of those ever-present nagging doubts of sexism in the ska field? One wonders if Prince Buster would appreciate the ironies of The Bodysnatchers tampering with a genre that has produced such pearls of wisdom as 'the Ten Commandments' and 'Wreck A Pum-Pum'. Nicky is philosophical.

"Obviously things like that get up your nose if you're a girl, but we don't push it. We just want to be up there helping people to enjoy themselves."

Stella takes the sexism question a stage further.

"The links we do have with ska music are through the things in it that we can use to our advantage. It's the music we are using, not the lyrics. I mean stuff like Prince Buster's 'Ten Commandments' is so ridiculously sexist that it's hysterical. It must be tongue-in-cheek."

"I bet it isn't," Rhoda muses — a little closer to the mark, methinks.

Of the half-dozen originals, the standout, and without a doubt the heaviest song in the set, is 'The Boiler', a harrowing account of a rape that sticks out a mile amidst the general good-time vibe of the other songs. Reaction to the song tends to vary, to the extent that some morons in the audience at a recent Hope And Anchor date were actually jeering the song. The band are perhaps over-kind to the jerks responsbible.

"They just don't know how to react to it," proffers Stella. "I believe that they are reacting that way 'cause they're uncomfortable. It's not 'cause they're having a good old jeer at the band."

Within the next couple of weeks, The Bodysnatchers should have completed their debut single. The most likely title name seems to be their catchy cover of Dandy Livingstone's 'Rock Steady'.

The single should be in the shops to coincide with a nationwide tour the group are due to start next month with The Selecter, their first real exposure to provincial audiences.

And then? Everyone seems a bit unsure about 'future plans' and suchlike. Either that or they just aren't letting on. They all express genuine surprise at the speed with which they have taken off even thus far. As Stella says: "We weren't pushing for it. We just wanted to do a couple of gigs to see how it would go . . ."

Just watch.

Left to right: Stella, Nicky, Rhoda, Miranda, S.J., Pennie. Pic: Virginia Turbett

Top pix: S.J. and Rhoda by Peter Anderson.

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FEBRUARY

1st	Cromer	West Runton Pavilion
2nd	Loughborough	University
3rd	Bristol	Locarno
5th	Cardiff	Top Rank
6th	Bradford	University
7th	Hull	University
8th	Newcastle	Polytechnic
9th	Manchester	University
10th	Sheffield	Top Rank
12th	Leicester	University
13th	Liverpool	University
15th	Aberdeen	University
16th	Dundee	University
17th	Glasgow	Tiffany's
18th	Edinburgh	Tiffany's
20th	Malvern	Winter Gardens
21st	Canterbury	Odeon
22nd	Norwich	University of East Anglia
23rd	Colchester	Essex University
24th	Birmingham	Top Rank
26th	Brighton	Top Rank
27th	Uxbridge	Brunel University
28th	Guildford	Civic Hall
29th	Cambridge	Corn Exchange

MARCH

1st	Dunstable	Queensway Hall
2nd	Leeds	University
4th	London	Hammersmith Palais

ral 3

THE '50s

ROCK 'N' ROLE

"WHEN rock'n'roll hit the screens it was already a part of the pop scene, had already made its impact on the record charts and was already in the process of creating a whole subculture based on its stars, followers, fashions and modes. Far from capitalising on a possibly fruitful trend, the cinema was actually terribly late in exploiting its potential. It wasn't until* The Blackboard Jungle *in 1955 that the cinema established a dynamic link between the musical revolution going on* outside *its own culture and the relevance of that social upheaval to its dramatisation of the current scene. Neither rock nor the movies would be quite the same again."
Philip Jenkinson and Alan Warner, *Celluloid Rock.*

Mods & Rockers: Marlon Brando in The Wild One (1954) and Phil Daniels in Quadrophenia (1979).

WHEN Bill Haley And The Comets played 'Rock Around The Clock' over the credit titles of *The Blackboard Jungle* those 25 years ago, it didn't matter that the song was not a particularly dynamic example of its type, that its practitioners were already ageing boppers or that the film itself was a routine slum school potboiler; for the first time kids heard their music in a dramatic context and it took on a new dimension.

For them it had enormous impact, summing up their pent-up frustration and energy and, in some cases, deprivation. Their vigorous response to those 'devil rhythms' disturbed parents and other establishment figures but doubtlessly delighted the media.

The following year a 55-year-old producer called Sam Katzman — who specialised in low budget bill fillers and the Jungle Jim series — put together *Rock Around The Clock,* a crude B-feature with the commercial good sense to spot the fermentation of this music revolution. The threadbare plot concerned the efforts of a manager to bring a hick town band to New York and thus revolutionise pop music with the Big Beat. Apart from Bill Haley And The Comets, appearances were put in by The Platters, Johnny Johnston and the extremely influential DJ who claimed to coin the term 'rock and roll', Alan Freed.

Ludicrously tame as it would appear now, *Rock Around The Clock* vent the teenagers' frustrations; they danced in the aisles, they tore up seats during screenings, scores of police were usually on hand for the sell-out performances. Efforts were made to ban the film in this country and the fact that rock's instant notoriety was branded by religious and media buffoons as decadent and carnal only enhanced its appeal.

The seeds for this extraordinary explosion had actually been sown a couple of years before in two seminal youth movies, *The Wild One* and *Rebel Without A Cause.*

The teen audience had already found new totems in the broody nihilism of Marlon Brando's biker in the former, and in the posthumous cult that mushroomed around James Dean, star of the latter. *Rebel* came out of the mainstream of the 'social conscience' themes that had earlier attracted other film-makers in the '50s and here dealing specifically with the problems of youth, director Nicholas Ray proved to be a man ahead of his time. (He was to prove it again, twice over, dealing with drugs in 1956's *Bigger Than Life* and ecology two years later in *Wind Across The Everglades.)*

Although it remained banned in this country for 15 years, *The Wild One* was a remarkably tepid melodrama about a gang of bikers terrorising a small town that ineptly bowdlerised themes that underground film-maker Kenneth Anger had been exploring for years (that motorbikes and their attendant paraphernalia had homosexual connotations).

The all-important image was Brando's surly, leather-clad menace. But the more effective film for the youngsters was *Rebel.* The manners and moods of mid-'50s teenagers were captured with a comic-book flourish and heightened lyricism that is inevitably dated; but the mythology of that time and culture remains intact, even if the cramming of all the action into one 24-hour period makes it seem all the more improbable. At that time the middle-class was becoming the dominant force in America, dominating more through its new economic affluence than through any positive thought, and *Rebel's* script — based on records from juvenile courts — attempted to find out just where the blame lay for the alarming increase in the arrests of minors. To the teenagers' delight, it was blamed on the parents (in the film, a weak-willed dad and a domineering waspish mum). And, yes, the rebel did have a cause: he wanted to fit into a happy family.

That the rebel was played by James Dean as a mumbling, inarticulate, crazy-mixed-up-kid struck a giant chord in the heart of teenage America; Dean's death in 1955 prompted a reverent sympathy for the character that created the idol, the one to emulate.

It was merely a matter of time before the arrival of the soundtrack for the teenage rebellion dance. First *The Blackboard Jungle,* second *Rock Around The Clock* and then, the deluge: *Don't Knock The Rock, Rock Pretty Baby, Shake Rattle And Roll* and *The Girl Can't Help It* (rock and roll in colour!) all appeared in 1957. Oh, and *The Reno Brothers.*

The Reno Brothers? Well, that's what it was called until producer Hal Wallis heard his young star sing a song called 'Love Me Tender'. Elvis Presley had arrived as a movie star — *Love Me Tender* was the first movie in Hollywood history to recoup its entire cost in the first three days of release — and to prove it the influential magazine *Harvard Lampoon* voted him the year's Worst Supporting Actor for his part in the film.

For the best part of the next 20 years, in over 30 films, Elvis was going to allow himself to betray rock and roll on the silver screen and rock would be bastardised in scores of cheap flicks, tattily packaged and flung at the kids by third-rate film-makers all too keen to jump on the closest bandwagon. And like the No.12 bus, they'd come in bunches: we were going to get the biker, beach and bikini pics, the festival flicks, the religious rockers, the road movies, the angry youth tracts, stereo in 16 tracks and big, bad Superblacks.

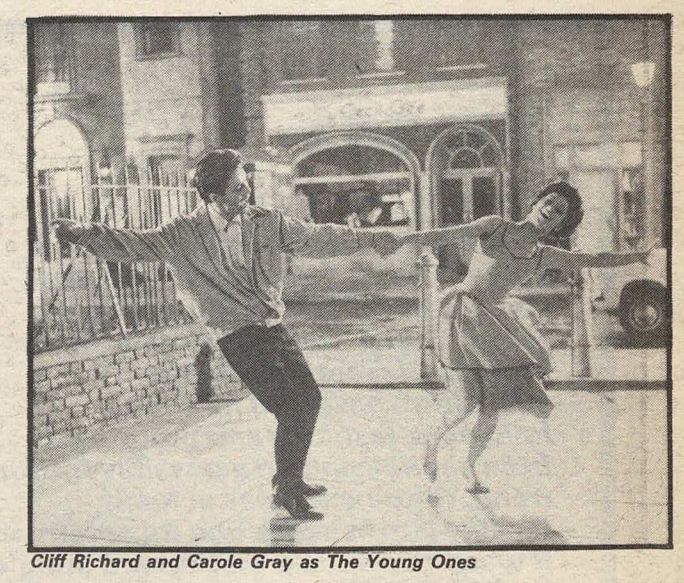
And then they were going to start all over again and get into nostalgia.

Continues over

NME kicks off a month's panoramic survey of the big beat on the big screen with a concise history of 25 years of Rock cinema.
By MONTY SMITH

Ringo needs Help!

James Dean



Cliff Richard and Carole Gray as The Young Ones

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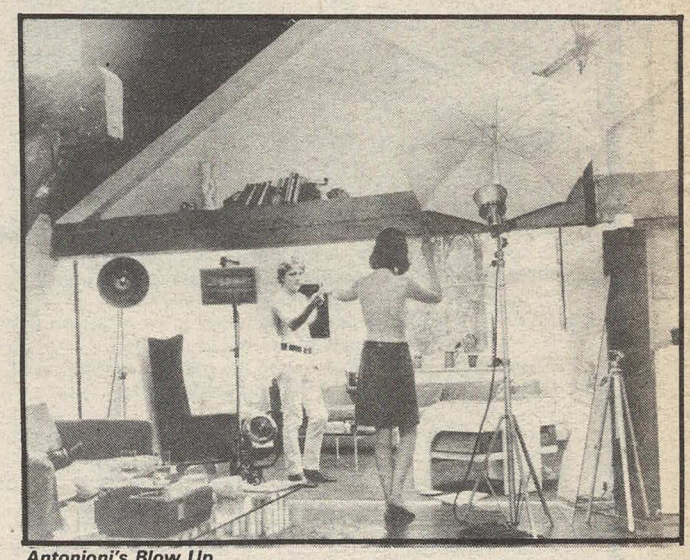
Elvis in Harem Holiday

A Hard Day's Night



Antonioni's Blow Up

ROCK 'N' ROLE

Continued from page 21

THE '60s

"THE power and violence inherent in rock made it an unsuitable accompaniment for the kind of happy-ever-after story producers automatically associated with musicals."
Mark Whitman, *Cinema '76*

AS the initial rush of rock and roll fever subsided and the music of the early '60s blanded out — mostly Brill Building AM fodder — so the teen movies became increasingly feeble, curious hybrids attempting to mix weak comedy with as much unrelated pop as possible. Nobody showed the confidence to commission an original work that would integrate music and narrative instead of imposing the former arbitrarily on the latter.

In this country the youth market efforts were no less uninspired than their American counterparts. We had already seen soon-to-be family entertainers Tommy Steele and Anthony Newley in *The Duke Wore Jeans* and *Idle On Parade*, and besides playing the immortally-named Bongo Herbert in *Expresso Bongo*, Cliff Richard had accused his vicar of, er, unnatural practices in *Serious Charge*. Now, instead of pyjama parties and vital information regarding the stuffing of wild bikinis, we got Billy Fury in *Play It Cool*, Helen Shapiro and Craig Douglas in *It's Trad Dad!*, Joe Brown in *What A Crazy World*, John Leyton in *Every Day's A Holiday* and Mark Wynter in *Just For Fun*. All dated quicker than a packet of Walls sausages but besides their uniform mediocrity, which imbues them with a sort of perverse charm, some of them were notable for providing young directors with their first big screen chance.

Michael Winner, for instance, graduated from *Play It Cool* to make a couple of Swinging London trifles before moving to America and striking up a productive working relationship with Charlie Bronson *(The Mechanic, Chato's Land, Death Wish etc)*. More importantly, Dick Lester was given the opportunity to acquaint himself with Wardour St after making *It's Trad Dad!* and came up trumps with the first two Beatles films, *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!*, inventive pieces of frenetic fun which at least attempted to give pop films their own language and a bit of style. In between the Beatles' pics, Lester won the Cannes Film Festival with *The Knack* and went on to find further critical favour with *Petulia, Royal Flash* and *The Three Musketeers*.

Cliff Richard, too, was fortunate in that he worked with Sidney J. Furie on *The Young Ones* and Peter Yates on *Summer Holiday*. Both directors tried to inject basically MOR musicals with a whiff of zest, against the odds. Furie (after directing Cliff through *Wonderful Life* as well) found fame with *The Ipcress File* and *Lady Sings The Blues*, favour with *The Boys In Company C;* Yates found fortune with *Bullitt* and *Breaking Away*.

Lester's work apart (which worked in a Beatles-created vacuum anyway), the milestone rock film of the mid-'60s was John Boorman's *Catch Us If You Can*. For the first time, the group involved in the package — ironically, the nondescript Dave Clark Five — selflessly sunk their corporate identity into a (for the time) downbeat story of two young people (Dave himself and Barbara Ferris) trying to escape from the pressures of their urban environment. Not only did it mark the debut of an immediately impressive director — Boorman's subsequent credits include *Point Blank* and *Deliverance* — but *Catch Us* had the courage to use Dave Clark's music as incidental background.

The implications should've been obvious: give a good director a viable project and — no matter how contentious the content — the possibility of something substantial being produced are greatly enhanced.

After 1965 the signs were that a bit more thought — not a lot, but a little — was going into the preparation of youth-orientated movies. Despite their derivative zaniness The Monkees, for instance, were extremely popular and their film *Head* (written by Jack Nicholson, directed by Bob Rafelson, later to work together on *Five Easy Pieces* and *The King Of Marvin Gardens)* showed in just about every frame that everyone concerned was well aware of the sheer commercialism and exploitation concerned; The Monkees had, after all, been formed specifically to create a sort of US TV Beatlemania. By letting the audience in on the joke, *Head's* makers were acknowledging the emergent cynicism of the young.

American International Pictures (AIP) had long specialised in crude, cheap and contemptible teen flicks made for no other motive than profit *(I Was A Teenage Werewolf, How To Stuff A Wild Bikini,* stupid films like that) and in 1968 they, as did youth, became even more cynical. Or maybe it was just that, at that time, over half the population of the US was under 30 and AIP felt it was a safe bet to appeal to the lowest common denominator.

The pulling power of the youth audience had been impressively demonstrated a year earlier by the success of Mike Nichols' soft-bellied satire *The Graduate* in which Dustin Hoffman's Benjamin partook of a mild, middle-class sexual rebellion (well, it mocked the morals and standards of a generation, at least). The message — mainly swallowed by affluent American students — was that, like Benjamin, you could make the bus. Box-office prowess aside, *The Graduate* was important only because it spawned a whole bunch of soft focus youth flicks with effete Seals And Croft types trying to emulate Simon And Garfunkel on the soundtrack.

AIP took note of the receipts, cut the crap and went for the throat: *Wild In The Streets* was based on the 'never trust anyone over 30' slogan, taken to its black humour limits. A rock singer is elected President and concentration camps are set up for the unfortunate half of the population which happens to be the wrong side of 30. "What," says the 24-year-old President, "do you ask a 60-year-old man? You ask him if he wants his wheelchair facing the sun or facing away from the sun."

Peter Watkins' *Privilege* treated a similar subject with a pretentious commitment to style (Paul Jones as the messianic politico-pop singer), but the witless caricature of *Wild In The Streets* had the idiot courage — and power — of its crudity. Both films spotlighted the savagery of rock and the manipulated power of the rock singer but *Streets* was nothing substantial and everything urgent, just like rock and roll.

So the youth cinema was becoming politicised at last and 1969 was a good year. There was a genuine feeling of a New American Cinema with overlooked and underrated examples like Robert Downey's *Putney Swope* (paranoid anachy in a *Mad* magazine-like parody), Arthur Penn's *Alice's Restaurant* (a logical extension of *Bonnie And Clyde's* ballad-like narrative and one of the least vogueish of the youth films) and Haskell Wexler's *Medium Cool* (which, using a semi-documentary approach to paint a vivid picture of American Strife at the time of the Chicago police riots, dared to take politics seriously).

And, of course, there was *Easy Rider*, a pared-down, tarted-up version of an AIP exploiter. Peter Fonda and director Dennis Hopper were the Honda hobos discovering America's loss of innocence, Fonda the inarticulate Christ-like observer, Hopper the hopped-up anarchist vagrant. An intuitive and overly romantic ballad, *Easy Rider* was often soft in the head and, like so many films whose aim is to tell a truth, it got a bit cross-eyed the closer it got to its goal: when the bikers fix a flat in a rancher's barn we see the rancher shoeing a horse, subtle stuff like that.

By far the most interesting character was Jack Nicholson's drunken lawyer whose surreal comic visions (the work of co-author Terry Southern?) and radical sagacity means he can talk his way out of most things — even the cooler when he's half-cut, patronising the police with panache.

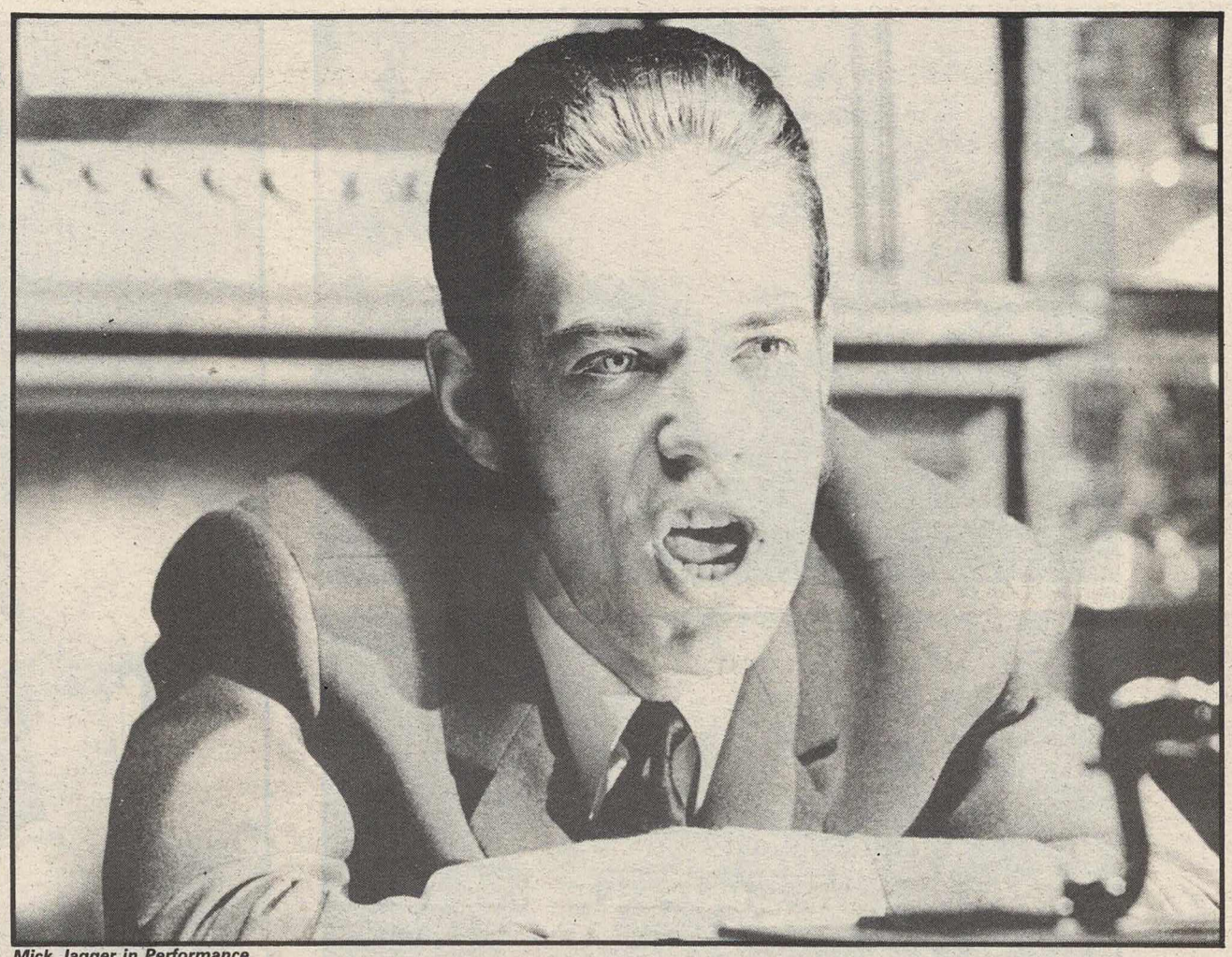
A nomadic, poetic statement, *Easy Rider* had great surface impact but as the US film critic Stephen Farber wrote at the time: "The interesting thing about *Easy Rider* is its sentimentality about American frontier myths. The film never questions the myths themselves but instead turns its anger against the Southern bigots who, in forgetting their nation's heritage, betrayed a once noble dream."

In 1969 *Easy Rider* seemed important and urgent; now it seems self-congratulatory and paranoid, naive and pretentious by turn. Still, it's a long way from *The Wild One*.

Townshend at Woodstock

Gimme Shelter

Fonda and Hopper in Easy Rider



Mick Jagger in Performance

Malcolm McDowell in A Clockwork Orange

THE '70s

"Actions speak louder than."
Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*

ESTABLISHMENT media has always made money from the rebellion against the status quo and, pathetically, in 1970 the major studios were attempting to sell youth the truth in absurdly phony films about genuine — at that time — student unrest.

The bad taste after the Chicago and Watts police riots lingered long and this was, after all, the time of Vietnam atrocities, the open oppression of blacks and the government sanctioned murders of youths on a university campus in Ohio. So Hollywood presented the audience with student slogans and symbols, mass media cliches and ciphers in teen movie clothing; dumb scripts, a few pop songs, lots of zoom lens work, 'shock' cuts — the last being the one clue to suggest that these weren't toilet roll commercials.

Getting Straight and *The Strawberry Statement* were two of the most pernicious examples. Like the others they used 'broad' language, nudity, frank sexual references, casual use of drugs and, most significantly, coy love interest: "See, they're just ordinary kids who got mixed up in protest by mistake!"

For over an hour *The Strawberry Statement* was unconscionably stupid, trendy, vacuous and embarrassingly unfunny, its sole raison d'etre being the climax, the reconstruction of a university sit-in, violently disrupted by the police. These films were endemic of the bright young men in tinted shades who spun their cameras around like tops, talked about 'commitment' and made exploitative garbage. They were not so much irreverent as irrelevant.

Probably the best two films depicting the bankrupt state of American morality were Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* and Peter Watkins' strident allegorical documentary *Punishment Park*.

Antonioni's *Blow Up* was a seminal film of the '60s, an acutely detailed observation of aberrant decadence in Swinging London (though probably a shade too ambiguous and ironic for an impatient youth audience), and *Zabriskie Point* was an entirely different kind of blow up — not the magnification of art into truth but the disintegration of materialism into trash, a Harvey Smith to the supermarket civilisation. An elegant film, utterly lacking in tension and immediacy, it was nevertheless a stunning marriage of music and image, no more so than in the formal climax when Pink Floyd's jarring 'Careful With That Axe Eugene' accompanied an oft-repeated explosion.

To take their minds off all this civil unrest, the young people of the early '70s held huge gatherings called Festivals. Two of the more notable were filmed for posterity; they'd make a great double bill (though you'd have to take a flask of cocoa).

Several million people, or so it seemed, congregated in Max Yasgur's cow farm in August 1969 and an extremely talented young documentary film-maker called Michael Wadleigh had a large camera crew present to record the event. A few pop groups showed up, too. *Woodstock* was an exuberant three hour celebration of a three day 'happening' which made exemplary use of intricate optical effects — split screen, overlapping double framing, you name it — and seems in retrospect, appropriately enough, like a very friendly apocalypse. Good, bad or indifferent, the musicians were photographed brilliantly, probably better than they'll ever be photographed again in their lives (or not, as in the case of Jimi Hendrix). Eat your heart out *Old Grey Whistle Test*. Martin *Taxi Driver* Scorsese worked on the editing, which would account for the theatrics amidst the taste and timing.

Altamont was the 'satanic' Woodstock, held just four months after the New York bash. It really pissed off the 'counter-culture' and *Gimme Shelter* gave them damn few reasons to feel cheery.

Hippies had a touching faith in redemption by lifestyle and at Altamont it blew up in their faces. The Rolling Stones goofed badly by having Hells Angels as security at their free concert and *Gimme Shelter* — the brothers Maysles (one's called Albert and the other isn't) employing a necessarily subjective form of cinema verite — was a fascinating, confused document of drama and dislocation. It's all here, from the behind the scenes squabbling over an available venue, to the portent of trouble to come during the Jefferson Airplane set. After whipping up the audience with the opening verses of 'Sympathy For The Devil', satanic majesty Mick Jagger is seen in all his impotence, utterly powerless to affect what the Stones' music, the boozed-up bikers and the freaked-out recipients of gangster-like treatment had accomplished.

Besides the mass gatherings of flared jean beasties, also rife at the time were the Superspade flicks — the Shafts, the Slaughters and the Superflys — which, whilst giving black audiences their own cinematic heroes for the first time, remained James Bonds in blackface to the accompaniment of funky rhythms from Isaac Hayes, James Brown and Curtis Mayfield. Ponderous religious rockers started popping up, too, *Godspell, Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Catch My Soul* all being dismal forerunners of the operatic *Tommy*. Pete Townshend's epic work allowed loony Ken Russell's stylistic excess full reign and the one surprise was that Jack Nicholson agreed to partake in such a flatulent exercise.

By far the best of this baroque bunch was the genuinely inventive *Phantom Of the Paradise*, Brian De Palma's freewheeling fusion of elements from Faust, Frankenstein and *The Picture Of Dorian Gray*. Not the least of its delights was an immensely unpleasant performance by the dwarvish Paul Williams as Swan, the ever-youthful head of Death Records, pledged to contract new souls to his satanic master. The climactic TV-networked massacre is one of the most bizarre, finely orchestrated sequences in any rock-orientated film and Williams' witty score remains vastly underrated. All but buried by the brouhaha surrounding the release of *Tommy*, *Phantom* eventually went out on a double bill with the cultishly popular *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, a clumsy '50s scifi spoof. And worth noting in passing is Richard Loncraine's *Flame*, a cynically offbeat showcase for medium metal stompers Slade, which breathed fresh fire into the old pop-group-makes-good plot.

The most interesting development of the '70s was a move by several major film-makers to aim their work directly at the young, often in a rock-related way. Thus we got Nicolas Roeg's *Performance* and *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, Antonioni's already-mentioned *Zabriskie Point*, Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets* and Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*.

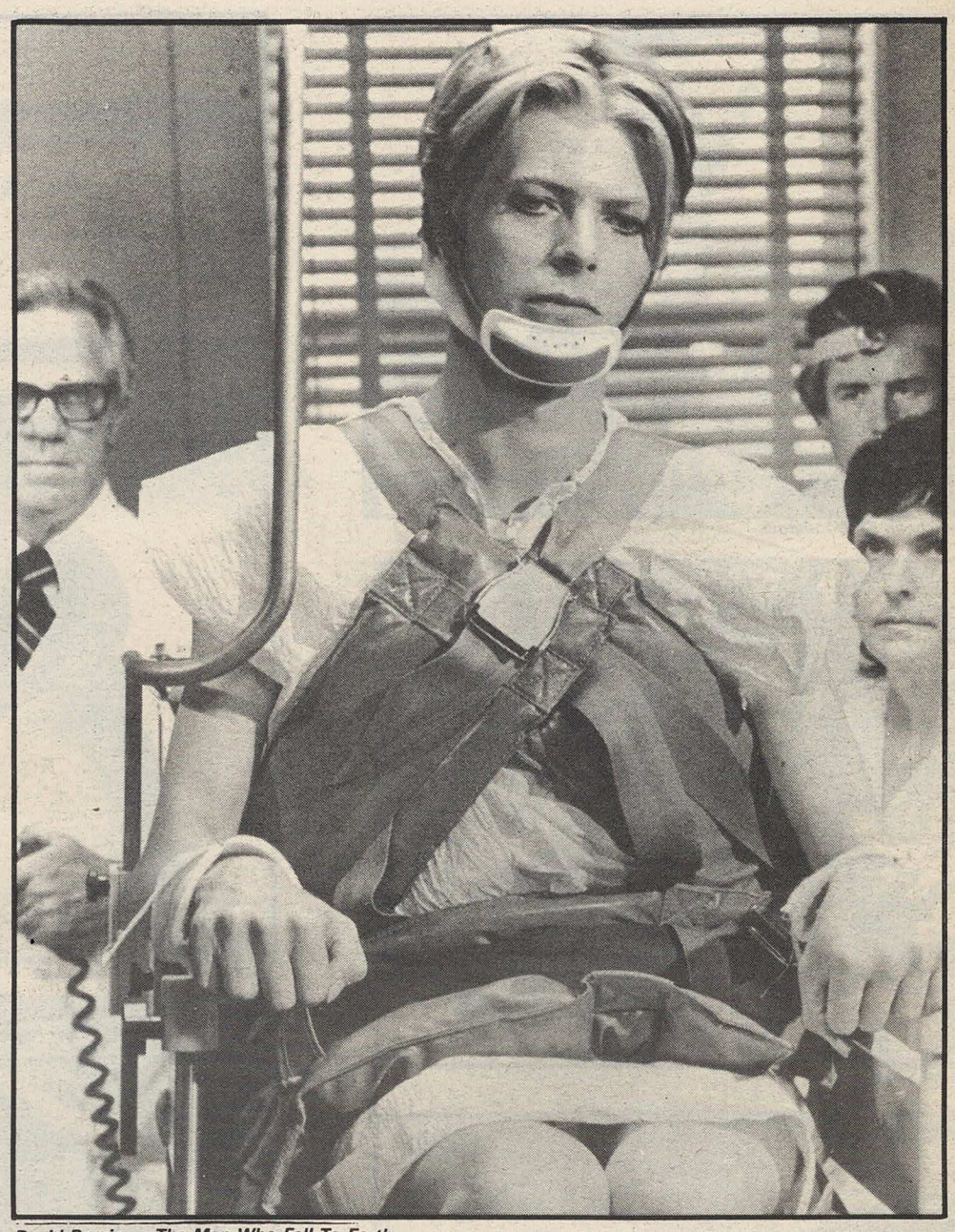
These intensely personal visions certainly threw into sharp relief the fantastic egocentricity and self-indulgent claptrap of 'experimental' movies by two of rock's most distinguished practitioners. Bob Dylan's *Renaldo And Clara* was not only incredibly tedious, at something like four hours it was incredibly tedious for a long time and Frank Zappa's *200 Motels* (made with the help of grandiloquent, frumpish Englishman Tony Palmer) was an ugly, garish video exercise. What both films shared was a mind-numbing propensity to indulge in the kind of cinematic trickery that would be beaten out of you in your first day at any self-respecting film school. And, believe me, Zappa's new film *Baby Snakes* is no improvement.

Roeg's *Performance* should, in fact, have started the trend for serious rock movies by serious film-makers a good deal earlier but Warner Bros, obviously disturbed by its extreme, elliptical structure, delayed its release for two years. Its one weak point, not critically damaging, was an uncertain performance by Mick Jagger as the bisexual rock recluse Turner but James Fox's astonishing portrayal of the gangster Chas Devlin ("Silly little geezer," he says to Turner, "you'll look ridiculous when you're 50") was strong enough to divert your attention from Jagger. Deliberately ambiguous and employing audacious use of cutting, *Performance* was a resonant attempt to illuminate sexuality, violence and death in a confrontation between the underworld and the underground. Vice and versa indeed, and the first half is probably the most authentic account the cinema has yet given us of

Continues over ▸

Nostalgia Lords Of Flatbush style

American Graffiti



David Bowie as The Man Who Fell To Earth

ROCK'N'ROLE

Continued from page 23

organised crime in Britain.

Not deterred by his experience with Jagger, Roeg used another rock icon in *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. Everyone agreed that David Bowie — with his ethereal, enigmatic features, frail body, gaunt face and bright orange hair — made an admirably convincing alien, a real stranger in a strange land. Roeg plunders pop in his new film, too, having Art Garfunkel play — none too convincingly — the male half of a sexually destructive pair in *Bad Timing;* he also uses, inappropriately, snatches of The Who's 'Who Are You' on the soundtrack.

It was the soundtrack of early '60s rock and roll which lent Scorsese's *Mean Streets* an added dimension, giving an already lurid Little Italy thriller extra electricity. As the American critic Pauline Kael wrote at the time: "The music is like an engine that the characters move to. But *Mean Streets* doesn't use music, as *Easy Rider* sometimes did, to do the movie's work for it. The music here isn't our music, meant to put us in the mood of the movie, but the characters' music. It's as if these characters were just naturally part of an opera with pop themes."

Two films that fortuitously caught the prevailing mood of nostalgia on both sides of the Atlantic, each making extensive use of period soundtracks, were *American Graffiti* and *That'll Be The Day*.

A vigorous movie about the listlessness and resignation of the late '50s/early '60s, *Graffiti* precisely parodied the AIP exploiter pic as well as a generation. But it also cherished dreams, which is why it worked so much better than mere nostalgia. Shut your eyes and shut out the dialogue and you had two hours of radio — and as one of the characters said: "Rock'n'roll's been going down hill since Buddy Holly died."

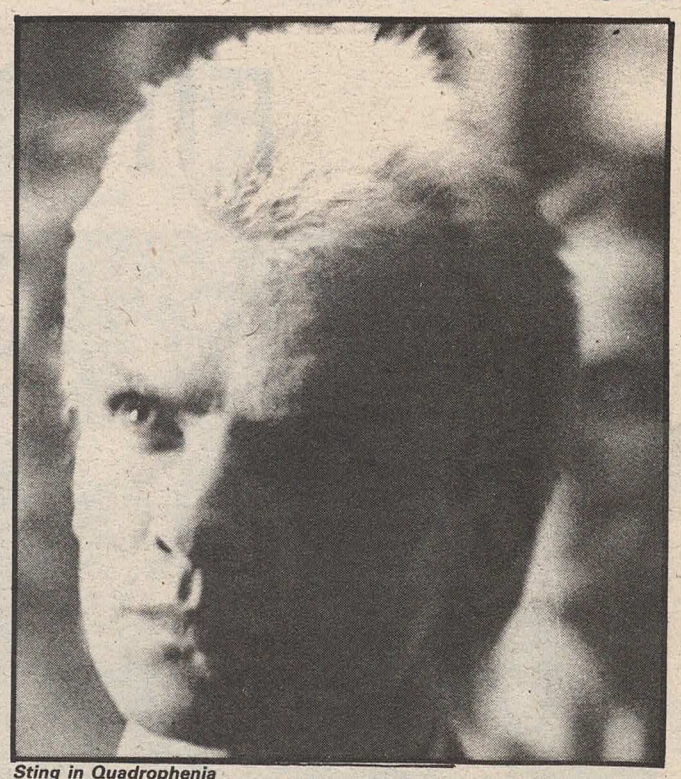
The ghost of Holly hung over *That'll Be The Day*, too, and this downbeat little film was no less perceptive than *Graffiti* and a good deal tougher. Its success owed as much to Claude Whatham's restrained direction as to Ray Connolly's acerbic script and David Essex was surprisingly effective as anti-hero Jim MacLaine, who abandons his academic chances for an itinerant life before handing over the last of his savings in exchange for a guitar. The freeze frame ending begged a sequel — one had been planned all along in any case — and *Stardust*, centering on

Essex and Ringo in That'll Be The Day

Superfly

Shaft

Adam Faith in Stardust



Sting in Quadrophenia

The Ramones in Rock 'n' Roll High School

MacLaine's fortunes as a rock singer up to the late '60s, followed the time-honoured traditions of the 'rising star' flicks of the '50s; the musical numbers confined to stage appearances and recording sessions rather than being integrated in the narrative.

But for the first genuinely great British rock film — as opposed to a film like *Performance* which merely used elements of rock — we had to wait unitl 1979. A raw and vivid account of adolescent emotion, *Quadrophenia* was worth the 24 year wait. The wonder of it was that it transcended its obvious marketable origins (based as it was on an inferior Who album and arriving at the height of an unlikely mod revival). This was achieved by playing down Townshend's music and presenting us with a bunch of kids who were painfully real, coping as best they could in a grim environment. The very talented young cast were handled by director Franc Roddam, who brilliantly created a convincing social and psychological realism. A minor miracle for a rock movie and *Quadrophenia's* gutsy exuberance is surely preferable to the vacuous insularity of a work like *Radio On*, which was a '50s-looking film with a sore '70s head and used rock music to make deep and meaningful points about the futility of something or other. And Sting — the singer in this country's most successful band — was in both! That's the magic of rock and roll movies, I guess — they're full of little ironies like that.

"Nobody ever sets out to make a bad movie!"
Fabled truism

SO THERE'S been the odd really fine rock and roll film *(Quadrophenia, Phantom Of The Paradise, American Graffiti, That'll Be The Day, The Harder They Come)* and many more rewarding films that have used varying degrees of rock elements *(Performance* and the others mentioned earlier). But has anything changed in the attitudes shown by the majority of production companies towards the young audience?

Well, apart from the obvious exceptions already dealt with, not a lot. Not when The Ramones can involve themselves in a cretinous exercise like *Rock'n'Roll High School*, a film which treats its audience as contemptuously as their '50s counterparts were by the then purveyors of teenage entertainment. After 25 years, the credo remains to a large degree 'Give 'em what they want — give 'em garbage.'

When will they stop flinging their film filth at our pop kids?

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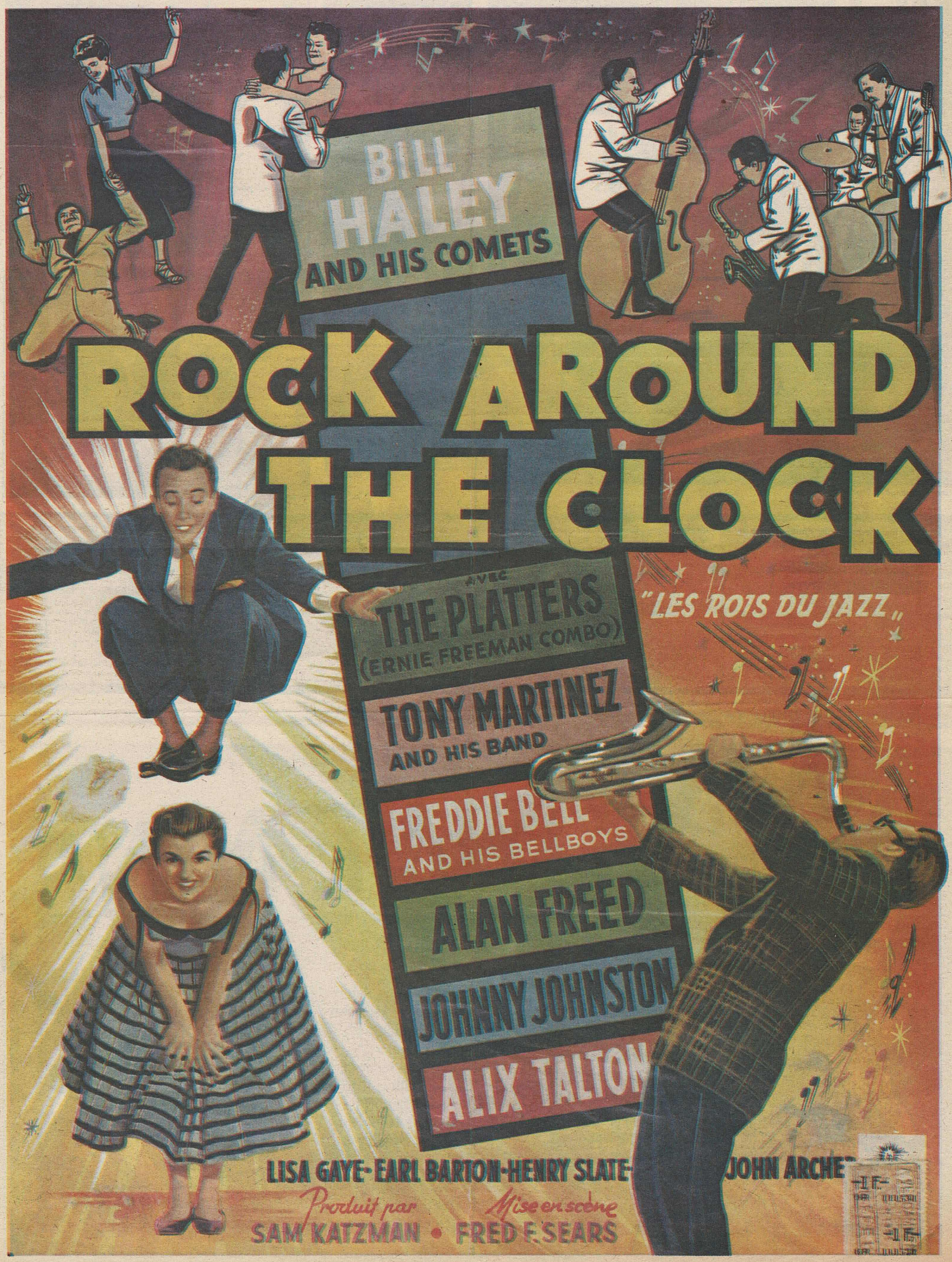

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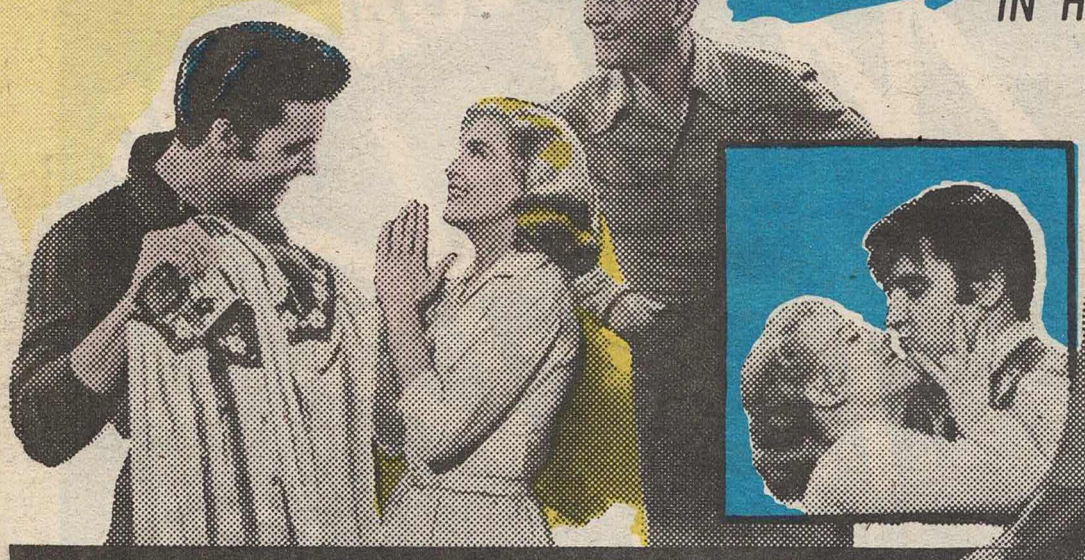

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METEORBALLS!

THE behind - the - scenes story of most major movies makes fascinating reading and when those movies involve costly special effects the story becomes even more full of intrigue.

Such is the case with *Meteor* and the *Star Trek* movie, which has the honour of being the most expensive film Paramount have ever made (executives will only put the figure at "less than $40 million").

The story of the *Star Trek* phenomenon is well documented in a wide variety of publications geared to satisfy the fan fever that is still raging. Despite all this Paramount has yet to admit that the series has showed a profit. That's Hollywood accounting procedures for you, and explains the reluctance of the major stars to sign on again for the feature film, as they've received even less out of the deal. They got no royalties from any of the reruns or from the licensed products associated with the film — there are 16 publications alone — which are expected to gross in the region of $260 million.

Aside from this, the special effects on the movie is where the real story lies. The firm of Robert Abel and Associates, who'd worked on the effects side for the TV series, were hired for the picture, successfully upped their budget from $4-6 million and then, after a year working on the optical,s only had a few partial effects to show in February 1979.

Director Robert Wise hit the roof, worried studio execs went into a huddle, and an extremely lucrative offer was made to those two top special effects men Douglas Trumbull *(2001, Close Encounters)* and John Dykstra *(Star Wars, Battlestar Galactica)* if they could save the whole project from disaster. They eventually agreed, were given somewhere approaching a $20 million budget and were faced with doing two years work in just nine months.

They succeeded admirably, in the process building nine new camera systems, the most sophisticated of which is called COMPSY (Computerised Motion-Tracking Photographic System), which is controlled by a computer with a memory capable of storing 64,000 microbits of information.

The other major effects movie of the moment is *Meteor,* though by comparison it looks dated and amateur. The story here is that the film is actually based on Project Icarus, an assignment given to students by an MIT professor. Their plan to stop a meteor that threatens to demolish the earth is soon to be published in its full form by MIT Press.

Incidentally, the movie was the subject of one of the most outrageous press launches in recent history when Samuel Z. Arkoff, head of American International Pictures, staged A Media Event by flying 70 newspaper and TV people to Flagstaff, Arizona.

Here chartered helicopters dropped them to the foot of the largest meteor crater in the world, produced by a large intergalactic rock some 22,000 years ago. At the bottom of the 570 ft crater, the media people were served ice-cold beer called Meteor (especially imported from France) by elegant bartenders in white ties and tails.

The whole bash cost a mere $200,000, twice as much as the cost of the original script which, incidentally, was never used. That's showbusiness.

Dick Tracy

Meteor

Directed by Ronald Neame
Starring Sean Connery, Natalie Wood, Karl Malden
(Warner Bros)

WITH Wood and Connery centre-screen the special FX boys had better be in good nick and, fortunately for *Meteor,* they are.

Discreetly toupeed, the ex-Bond star and world's fastest-ageing actor plays Paul Bradley, an ex-NASA whiz, recalled in emergency because of his unique expertise, played as a sort of Scottish public school Clint Eastwood.

The plot is initially quite intriguing. A five mile-wide chunk of asteroid is heading earthwards and due to hit in six days. Space station Hercules, Bradley's brainchild, had nuclear warheads pointed spacewards for just this eventuality — only now they're pointed USSR-wards, despite treaty obligations. Even redirected, neither Hercules nor the Russian equivalent alone has the necessary firepower, making co-operation inevitable.

Once Bradley's opposite number has flown to New York, along with interpreter Wood, the warheads are soon aligned. It being that kind of film, you then wonder what can pad things out till zero hour. Will it be the Love Interest or More Problems? The latter. Meteorettes penetrate the atmosphere, tasters for the Big One. Hong Kong and an Alpine valley are convincingly trashed, New York less so, leaving a certain sardonic pleasure to be gained watching the saviours of mankind generously coated with sewage as they escape from near-entombment via the subway.

Karl Malden celebrates a break from *Streets Of San Francisco* by growing a moustache and Natalie Wood appears to speak fluent Russian. Now you know everything. **Harry George**

No Wells farrago

Time After Time

Written and directed by Nicholas Meyer
Starring Malcolm McDowell, David Warner and Mary Steenburgen
(Warner Bros)

IT IS 1893. Exposed as Jack The Ripper, Dr John Stevenson escapes via the Time Machine in his friend H. G. Wells' cellar. The machine, working on the homing pigeon principle, returns with the dateometer reading 1979. Horrified that his invention has unleashed a monster on Utopia (sic), Wells gives chase. He arrives in the middle of a San Francisco exhibition of Wellsiana.

Nicholas Meyer's choice of Wells and the Ripper as time-travellers is inspired. HG's theories, ranging through science to socialism and female emancipation, render him uniquely well-prepared for the late 20th century. Only the survival of violence disconcerts him.

Having tracked Stevenson (David Warner) to his hotel, Wells (Malcolm McDowell) urges him to return: "We don't belong here." The good doctor couldn't agree less. "In 1893 I was a freak. Ninety years later I'm an amateur . . . I'm home." Flicking through the TV channels — American football, bloodshed on the news, Hendrix trashing his guitar — he leaves Herbert aghast.

Wells is already being pursued by Amy Robbins (Mary Steenburgen), an over-evolved Californian whose name will be a giveaway to Wells buffs. Then the murders start and this odd couple become inextricably involved . . .

A refusal to camp it up pays handsome dividends in a near-perfect blend of humour and tension. Out-of-time gags, for instance, are underplayed and sensibly rationed. A burst of the Stones' 'Time Waits For No One' as the machine approaches 1979 is another neat touch.

David Warner is simply admirably caddish, while to one who knows Malcolm McDowell mainly from *A Clockwork Orange* and the flatulent *If*, his restraint here comes as a pleasant surprise. Wells' idealism could so easily have palled, yet remains winning throughout.

In a film loaded with 24-carat charm, however, it's Steenburgen that puts the diamond on the top. Jerked out of her comfortable existence, Amy's fluctuation between resilience and terror is funny, touching and *very* subtle. On this form, it's look-over-the-shoulder time for Diane Keaton.

Nicholas Meyer exploits a slender fantasy to the full without once going over the top and the result is a total triumph.

Harry George

H. G. Wells (Malcolm McDowell) struggles to keep his glasses and moustache on straight as the LAPD drag him back into the Tardis in 'Time After Time'.

Silver Screen

La Cage Aux Folles (Birds Of A Feather)

Directed by Edouard Molinaro
Starring Ugo Tognazzi and Michel Serrault
(United Artists)

IF NOT exactly a cinematic tour de force, *La Cage Aux Folles* is nonetheless a delightfully funny pic, a veritable thigh-slapper.

Directed by Ed Molinaro (of *L'Emmerdeur* infamy) with a panache that overcomes its stagey origins, it highlights the forces of staunch Christian conservatism as something quite oddball in a normal world of camp, self-conscious homo sex — and the two tribes clash on the widescreen like green pants and purple socks.

Upstairs is ageing smoothy-chops Renato (Tognazzi) and his outrageously queer — sorry, there's no other word for it — spouse Zaza (Serrault); downstairs is their disorderly, but flourishing, transvestite night-club 'La Cage Aux Folles'. Their problems begin when Renato's son — spawned of a chance hetero fling 20 years ago — returns home from university to announce his proposed marriage to the only daughter of M. Charrier, who just happens to be the Gen. Sec. of the Union of Moral Order.

If your taste for French comedy ended with having Moliere rammed down your throat at school, prepare to have your buds retitillated. Because if you don't know what good clean fun is — and just what good *is* it? — you'll find this a squeal a minute.

Rick Joseph

A bible belter...

Wise Blood

Directed by John Huston
Starring Brad Dourif, Nod Beatty and Harry Dean Stanton
(Artificial Eye)

HAZEL Motes is a prodigal son without access to any Welcome mat. Returning home in a US Army uniform, his greeting consists of the family farm gone to seed and a tombstone epitaph over a former relative: *gone to become an angel*. Most of the neighbourhood has either "left or died".

In this soured, bible black belt of deep Southern rural USA there's but one thing left for the poor boy to do, and it's what the natives do best: preach. Anyone can and will start up their own peculiar brand of church, and the resultant varieties are as amateurish and invariably as poisonous as still-brewed liquor — nobody gives a goddamn how ethical, or even how legal it is, just so long as it *is*, and they can repent with it.

"There *was* no Fall!" Motes rages at one point, but it is within precisely that tangled tangent of religious algebra that *Wise Blood* is plotted, from the novel of the same name written in 1952 by Flannery O'Connor, a devout Catholic woman whose Motes character was apparently intended as a cruel lampoon on Southern evangelism — which religion the author was none too keen on as a PR service in spreadin' The Word.

Huston's film (screenplay by Benedict Fitzgerald) doesn't dwell on too many specifics and could conceivably take place in any sleepy Southern backwater at any time in the past three decades. His project is more obviously the stitching together of storyline and metaphor.

Brad Dourif (who stuttered memorably in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*) is a godsend as Motes, bulging marble eyes set autistically on obscure Kierkegaardian goals, his dialogue spat out like slivers of broken teeth in a Jack Nicholson drawl gone haywire.

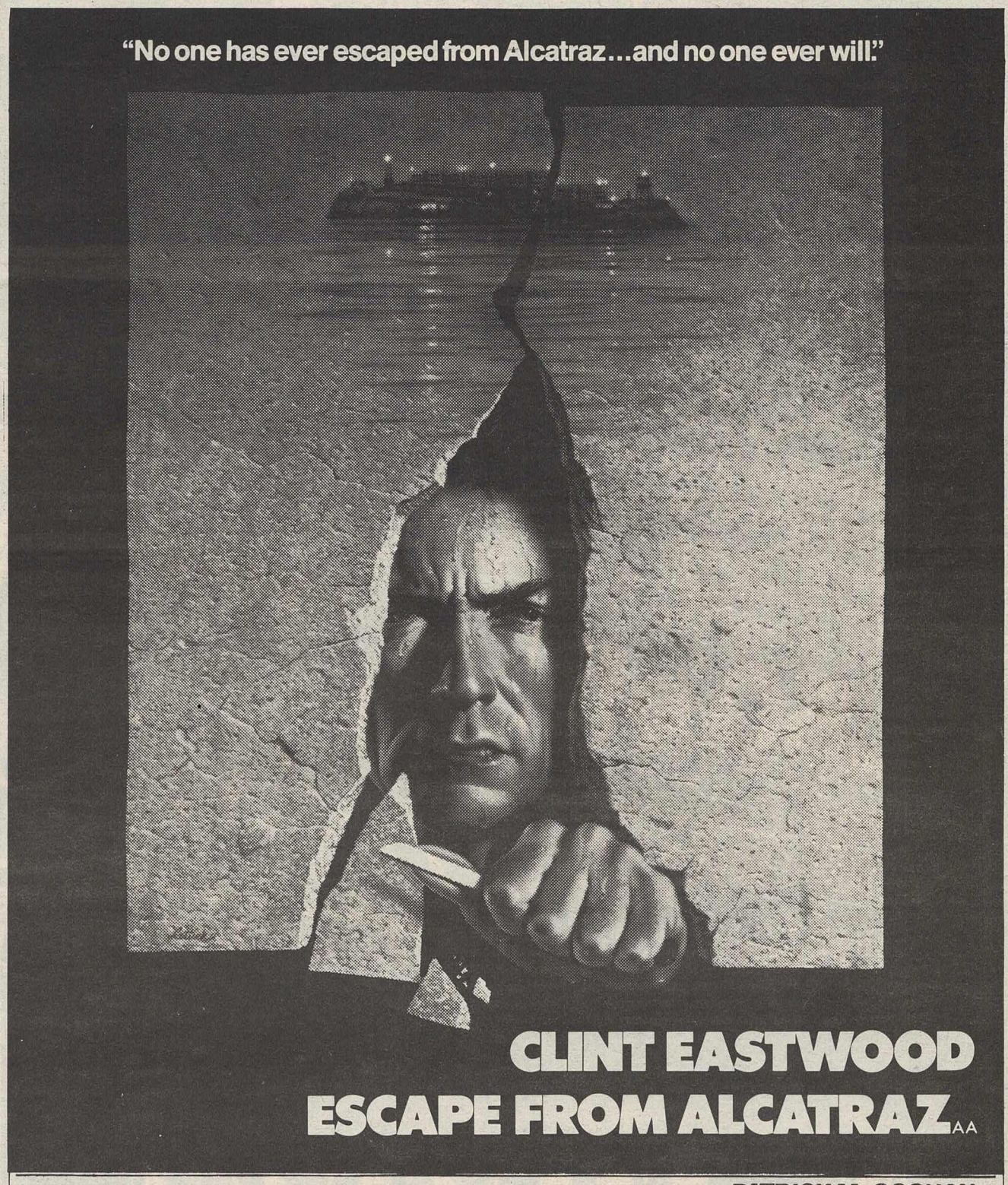
Bound to religion from the time of his upbringing by a hellfire preaching grandpappy (played by Huston) Motes sets about debunking the community's cherished theological beliefs, spurred on by street corner clashes with a 'blind' minister and his daughter (Harry Dean Stanton and Amy Wright). He dons Quaker's hat and dark suit, all the time denying the semiotics of his cloth — "There ain't but one thing I want y-e-w t'know. I don't believe in *anything*" — and founds his 'Church of Truth Without Jesus Christ', where "the blind don't see and the lame don't walk".

Motes' "faith" — in his own idea, in the 'blind' preacher, even in his crumby second hand car — is a schizophrenic's. He can't distinguish between how things function for him and what they actually may mean outside his enclosed vision(s). Which is ultimately how the film's vision of Motes and his 'tragedy' comes over — strangely ambivalent, lazy almost, a pirouette of a pic with suspiciously easy laughs at the expense of ill-sketched characters.

It's not that Huston appears wary to judge his character — films like Schrader's *Blue Collar* and Romero's *Martin* have recently proven that it isn't necessary to explicitly prescribe morality to present extreme moral crises — more that he appears wary to do anything with them, never making sufficiently clear which side of the line between farce and fatalism is being smudged.

The violence of both Dourif's performance and Motes' penultimate metaphysical choices are squandered. The message to Huston here would seem to be: look to the Motes in your own 'I'?

Ian Penman



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Todd masquerades as The Sunshine Kid. *Pic: Anton Corbijn.*

Yes, we have no nirvanas

UTOPIA
Adventures In Utopia
(Bearsville)

THE NO longer implacable but apparently un-stoppable Todd Rundgren releases his first blow to the forward aspirations of the new decade, a concept album. But there's a catch, for this isn't really a concept album, merely the soundtrack for a concept *video* of the same name. Get the picture?

No doubt you don't, because 'Adventures In Utopia' hasn't been seen yet (as far as I know), and may even be the poor man's version of the first commercial videodisk, commissioned from the Runt by RCA using his very own TV studio — the latter presumably an arm of something called The Utopia Foundation, itself a further conceptual absurdity courtesy the megalomaniacal macrostructural mind of a man who wrote his own epitaph with the words: "If a thing's worth doing, it's worth over-doing!"

Utopia (the group) is Todd's supposedly democratic four-piece vehicle for Utopia (the concept) as distinct from his solo work. Since his output diverged into these two streams in the mid-'70s the solo albums have been an even blander blend of archetype mixed-up Glitter Kid torch ballad — the Toddsongs of his 'Something / Anything', 'Wizard' and 'Todd' seminal '70s psychosis phase — that he mistakenly thinks will keep his star burning with old fans who want to keep the pop flame kindled, while the Utopia albums offer the discerning dopehead a blend of pompous instrumental work and quasi-spiritual nirvana along with the odd torch ballad. There's only style to choose between the two streams. Both carry the unmistakeable imprint of those early albums, developed way past the point where anyone except Todd would have conceded an *impasse*, but better your own cliches, I suppose, than someone else's.

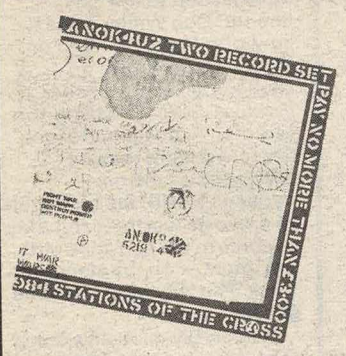
On the ten songs culled from the eight episodes of 'Adventures In Utopia' (the TV serial), Kasim Sultan John Wilcox and Roger Powell aid Todd's descent from the sublime to the ridiculous with a kind of dutiful, ignorant silence. They play everything perfectly. Their jobs will never be jeopardised by a machine.

So what of the songs? Never mind that the *sound* is pop-pomp crossover rock the guaranteed-radio-play likes of which Queen would give a year's mascara for, what about those Toddsongs? I've listened to this album more than I can really bear to, and if I hadn't already heard every last nuance the first time I played it, it would have been my pleasure to eat these words.

Minor cranky gems of Todd's way with a couplet abound: *"Moses went into the desert/Moses came back with the law / Jesus went into the desert / God only knows what he saw."* But the once really pertinent hard-shelled, soft-centred I'm-mad-as-hell-and-I'm-not-gonna-take-it Soul Quest of his early years has long come to an end.

Todd espouses the result of this quest, his Utopia (the concept) on all the songs that don't deal cynically with rock or sentimentally with love in extremely trite, quasi-spiritual terms, but worst of all with such wretched certainty — something he would once have abhorred. He used to be so fallible, just like me and you. Oh well, Here lies Todd Rundgren. Doing it to death.

Paul Rambali



CRASS
Stations Of The Crass

(Crass Records)

CRASS, as you probably know, are a group of intensely sincere people who live in a communal house near Epping, daub London's underground with provocative graffiti and make independent hard-core punk records which advocate anarchy, peace and freedom.

The problem at hand (a personal one?) is that having met Crass a year ago, when I liked them and agreed with many of their contentions, I now find that the ensuing twelve months have driven a large wedge between what seemed like minor differences and, more to the point, that I don't like their new album at all.

My view is that Crass have backed themselves into a corner, casting off potential allies with an abusive ferocity that has me wondering how they can accuse others of divisive tactics. The music press, RAR, bands with record deals — all are written off in a series of aggressively hostile songs with no less venom than Crass expend on more obvious targets like religion and the monarchy. The fact that these groupings include many people with aims similar to their own seems to have escaped Crass. The line appears to be that all tactics must be identical to theirs or be wrong.

And, despite their passivism, Crass assault their critics with a verbal violence that shuts down all hope of discussion — which is silly because Crass do raise some important points that need to be talked through rather than disappear behind a barrage of slagging-off.

Crass' main flaws, I think, stem from their fundamental conservatism vis a vis punk, both as a musical and a political event. Their work reveals a nostalgia for '77 that is almost obsessive, and from which comes many of their more moralistic attitudes and their deliberate musical narrowness.

"Punk was once an answer" they claim on 'White Punks On Hope', already idealising and distorting the past in an archetypically regressive manner. Punk was a gesture, a fart in the face of authority — it was never an *answer*. At best, it was a beginning, opening up possibilities which people are still exploring in a variety of ways. It seems a good thing to me: the more inroads into the heart of the beast (read music biz) the better. But Crass seem to want a mass return to the simplistic sloganising and songstructures of early punk. They want to turn back the clock and start again.

This leads them to all sorts of absurdities and contradictions. 'White Punks On Hope' has them accusing *"Marxists"* of *inventing* a right/left split in order to divert punk energy! The rise of the NF in the mid-'70s seems to have escaped their notice.

Similarly, Crass can proclaim on one track *"middle-class, working class, it's all a load of shit"* yet on others take time out to decry *"the privileged few"*. Quite how these two views are compatible isn't clear to me.

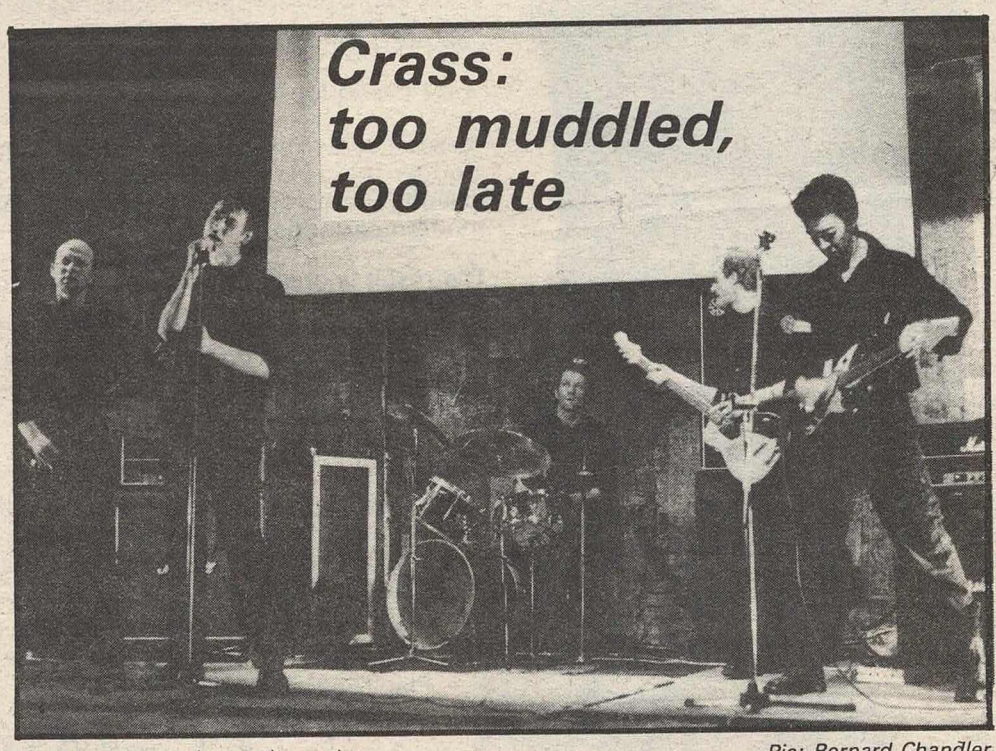
Nor is it clear how a group of pacifists would dis-priviliege these few. "Destroy power not people" is an admirable slogan, but what happens if those people who have the power are reluctant to relinquish it?

Crass are ubiquitously imprecise, disguising their vagueness in a noisy, emotive lashing-out at amorphous targets like the "system". Which system, how and why the system works, what precisely constitutes the system — these points are left unclarified except for hints of a media/church/state conspiracy and frequent reiterations that *"it's all a load of shit"*. Not exactly helpful. And I suspect it's Crass' refusal to pinpoint their targets in a more specific manner which fuels their all-or-nothing purism.

Not that Crass themselves don't err at times. Their use of *"bastard"* as an insult, for example, is an implicit legitimisation (sic!) of an institution — marriage — which they explicitly condemn. It may seem a minor point, but then language *is* the primary dispenser of ideology.

My final complaint returns us to the music — it's the same old manic three-chord bash that lingers on in the work of the Subs and Upstarts. To these ears it sounds dull, dated and defunct. Crass are capable of much better and the occasional variant track, like the disco-tinged 'Walls', proves this; their work on the recent Honey Bane single is a further example of a different and far more interesting musical approach.

Yet they restrict themselves to basic punk noise. Why? Why do Steve Ignorant's gabbled, sneering harangues dominate the album to the point of relentless monotony? Why do Crass write lyrics which Tony Parsons acutely, if a little unkindly, characterised as "Gumbie-activism" when in conversation their political analyses are so much more sophisticated?



Crass: too muddled, too late

Crass masquerades as themselves. *Pic: Bernard Chandler*

For all their professed contempt for "street credibility", Crass seem to adhere fixedly to a particular set of punk credentials. Which makes me wonder just what they're trying to prove and to whom? What began, on their 'Feeding Of The Five Thousand' EP, as a statement has become on 'Stations' a style, a stance: empty and rigid. Crass remind me of those so-called 'radical' folksingers who denigrate pop because they claim electric guitars are fascist. It's another example of good intentions paving the way to artistic and political sterility.

'Stations Of The Crass' is a double album, containing nearly 40 tracks, and sells at £3 per copy. Of which £1 goes to recuperating costs, 70p to the band, 30p to the distributors (Rough Trade) and £1 to the retailer (or £1.50 if you're Virgin Records and think you can get away with selling the album for £3.50). Side four is live, utterly unlistenable except for seasoned headbangers and pointlessly includes inferior versions of many of the tracks on the first three sides.

Memo to Crass: you may think I'm a "wet liberal" or have "sold out" to the music biz (that's your problem), but this is intended as a *constructive* critique.

Graham Lock

Reggae, Roots, Rock

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Creation Rockers Vols 1-6
(Trojan)

TRY to overlook the gaudy, shabby artwork that passes for presentation and forget the spurious comparison with the vastly overrated 'Tighten Up' series of albums. What we have here is the nearest thing so far to a comprehensive collection of Jamaican music.

Each volume of 'Creation Rockers' stands on its own as a chronological (sometimes erratically so) mini-history from ska through rock steady to reggae. I'm not sure whether that's preferable to one album of ska, one of rock steady, etc, but they're budget-priced anyway.

Most of the ska tracks offered are instrumentals with the occasional spittle-laden vocal (check Baba Brooks' 'Guns Fever'), while the rock steady tracks lay appropriate emphasis on soulful vocals (the Techniques' 'You Don't Care', with Lloyd Parks singing lead, I think, and the Uniques' seminal 'My Conversation' stand out a mile). On record at least, that part of reggae history is fairly straightforward: there was a lot of so far unheralded great music in those days, but the basic sounds of ska and rock steady were pretty uniform.

When reggae as such appears on the scene in 1968, it becomes much harder to give a clear survey of the various styles. Without resorting to the merely academic, 'Creation Rockers' manages to provide plenty of clues (but no liner notes, unfortunately) to everything that's gone on since, and usually with classic tracks which aren't obvious choices: Big Joe's 'Glitter Not Gold' is Joe at his best, toasting to Aubrey Rollens' 'All That Glitters', and I'd buy the album (vol. 2) for that alone, as there's no hope now of finding it on a single; two tracks from Bob Andy ('Life' and 'Feeling Soul') show why he's well ahead of almost everybody when it comes to intelligent songs, well sung; Peter Tosh's 'Brand New Second Hand' is one of his half dozen decent records.

There are some eccentric choices, notably in the case of Augustus Pablo, whose three tracks don't really represent his best; even then, they're by no means bad music. If I had to recommend one album from the six, I think it would be vol. 2, with the Wailers' 'Caution' *("Hit me from the top, you crazy motherfucker"* — not a common reggae turn of phrase), a good slice of Glen Brown music, Ken Boothe's 'You're No Good', as well as the Uniques, Bob Andy and Big Joe.

But for the price of about a dozen pre-release singles of dubious merit (this is 1980 remember?), you can get six albums of already proven worth, with plenty of surprises. It's definitely worth the loot and, if you don't like the sleeves, you can always disguise them in plain brown wrappers when you get home.

Nick Kimberley

SLEEPY LABEEF
Rockabilly Heavyweight
(Charly)
AL ROBERTS JR.
Frogabilly *(Frog)*

TWO made-in-Britain slices of rockabilly, one by a man-mountain from Arkansas, the other by a guitar-playing anthill from Stanmore, Middlesex.

LaBeef's offering is, predictably, the better buy, his freeze-frame Cash of a voice dragging its way through songs by Sleepy John Estes, Carl Perkins, Willie Dixon, Hank Williams and other therapeutic pen-pushers, while Dave Travis' Bad River Band thrashes in spirited style

But Roberts' more modest fireside boogies, taped on a front-room Teac, are quite good fun — and it's noticeable that he's upped his vocal standards by a shade since his initial 'Rockabilly Guitar Man'. However, it's an instrumental, a multi-dubbed homage to Les Paul, that proves one of the album's stronger items and perhaps this is an avenue Roberts should explore further.

Fred Dellar

Pic: Kate Simom

Augustus Pablo

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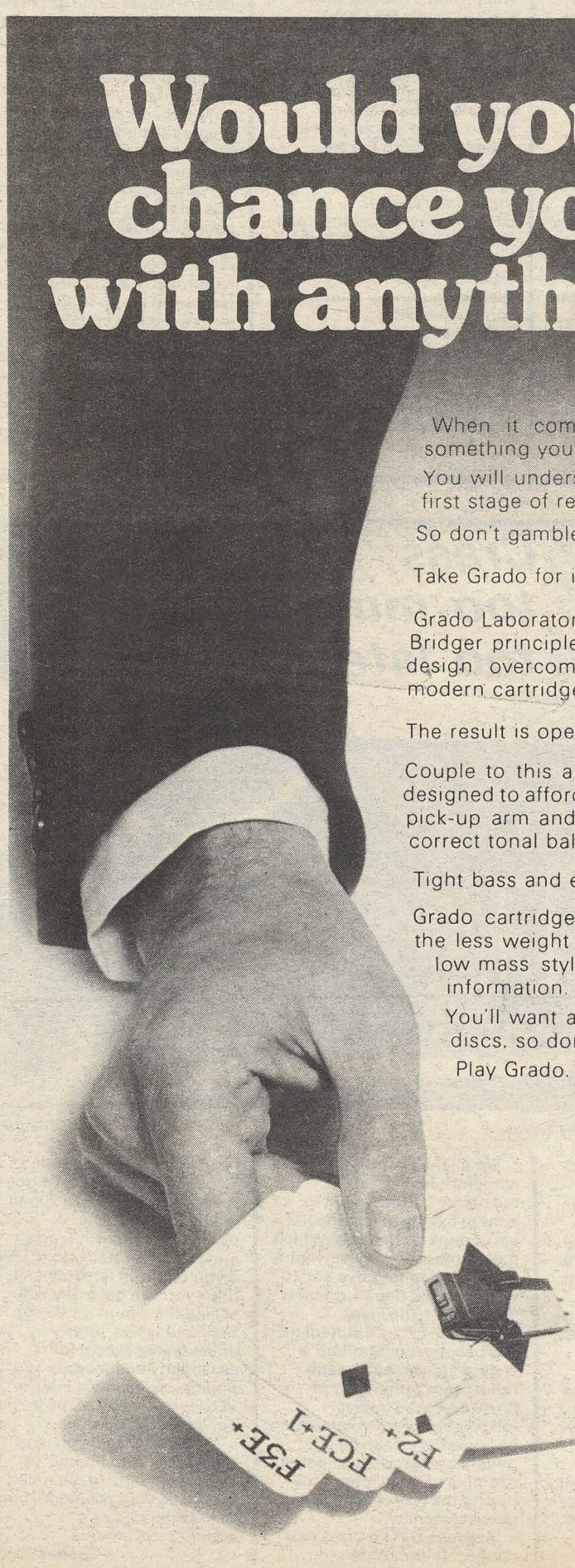

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ALEX HARVEY
The Mafia Stole My Guitar
(RCA)

YOU know how it is on the last tube home: you try not to look up but there's always this inebriate lurching your way, with a bleary grin and a bottle of something not very nice: "Y'wanna drink, Jimmy? Heh heh! Uh? Wassa marra wi' ye?"

Well don't look now, but he's back again. Alex Harvey, nutter of this parish, the Gorbals' answer to Mario Lanza and sly-eyed veteran of the University of Life, has re-emerged from whatever twilight zone it is he's been haunting these past three years, and delivered a nervous world of a new album with a new band. The syndicate took his guitar away, he says, but the cover depicts him by the quayside, hugging the rusted telecaster that he's dredged up and rescued from the depths.

The results are rather like Harvey's past: chequered. An uneven but ultimately likeable work, the present collection appears to span a range of the man's obscure obsessions and familiar affections, and very odd bed-fellows they are too.

Flaunting his cocktail crooner roots, there's a cabaret-smooth rendition of 'Just A Gigolo / I Ain't Got Nobody' which is pleasant but eminently unnecessary, as is the slightly over-performed version of Johnny Kidd's 'Shaking All Over' (especially poor when set besides SAHB's splendid "Giddy Up A Ding Dong' from the classic 'Next' LP).

Alex Harvey

The opening 'Don's Delight' is just a dispensable instrumental, jazzish and brief, but serves as a formal introduction to the new line-up: Don Weller on sax, co-writer Matthew Cang on guitar, Tommy Eyre on keyboards, Gordon Sellar (bass) and Simon Chatterton (drums). A looser and more seasoned team than its predecessor, the more dynamic SAHB, the outfit gets to prove its worth — and Alex to confirm his narrative gifts are intact — on the stand-out track 'The Whalers (Thar She Blows)'.

A superbly evocative song, 'The Whalers' matches a subtly oceanic rhythm with Harvey's snarling sea-dog theatricals in a passionate hatchet-job on the business of slaughter for fun and profit. Of the remaining compositions — 'Back In The Depot', 'Wait For Me Mama', the title-track

IMPORTS

THE sort of white blues-band that brings respectability to the name, the Maryland-based **Nighthawks** — Jim Thackery (vocals, guitar), Mark Wenner (harp), Pete Ragusa (drums) and Jan Zukowski (bass) — have four albums around on Adelphi, only three of which I've yet managed to lay my mitts on.

Arguably the best of these is 'Open All Night' (AD4105 — 1976) which is pure unadulterated Nighthawks, the foursome wheeling and dealing through the whole spectrum of the blues, gut-spilling on Sony Boy's 'Help Me', laying down near-Western Swing riffs on Elmore James' 'Shake Your Money Maker' and providing a vocal line on Mel London's 'Little By Little' that reminds me of such pre-doo wop black groups as the Delta Rhythm Boys.

'Side Pocket Shot' (AD4115 — 1977) is more diverse, with The Rhythm Kings' horns providing a big band feel on such cuts as 'I Keep Cryin'', Thackery trading licks that edge from Muddy Waters through to Wes Montgomery as he sidles alongside a friendly tenor. On 'James' Hawaiian Punch' he provides something completely different, demonstrating how Louis Jordan *would* have sounded if only his band had featured slide guitar, while 'Vaseline Machine No. 2' merely serves to prove that anything Leo Kottke can do, Thackery can at least emulate.

'Jacks And Kings' (AD4120 — 1978), the third of my acquisitions is both the most and least interesting, finding The Nighthawks in the company of pianists Dave Maxwell (from James Cotton's band) and Pinetop

Useless, Feeble, Ordinary

UFO
No Place To Run
(Chrysalis)

AS you undoubtedly know, UFO, as moniker and fluctuating musical force have been around a little longer than Archimedes' Screw, drawing water varying from lead to mercury. In short, some say they make "hot metal albums". But as alchemists, despite years of night school, they amount to the refined mediocre, producing music of a type that once used to be touted around the college circuit as "progressive" — i.e. essentially loud, riffy, repetitious and with especial emphasis on grievous bodily bass and lead guitar that masqueraded as "fluid" by rapidly metamorphosing into a continuous catcall.

Carbon-dating methods have turned up examples of the genre dating as far back as 1967, but refinements in recording techniques (in this particular case, former Beatles producer George Martin, for example- have, to an apparently large selection of the record-buying public, warded off the original planned obsolesence.

A pity Ford couldn't have done the same with the Escort. Undoubtedly UFO have made a success of their thing — but, in comparison to the unintentionally self-deprecating humour of Ted Nugent, or the straight-up honest-to-God hookline perfected with unwavering dedication by Status Quo, UFO have relied totally on a terrier-like hold on the turn-ups of the Emperors' New Clothes in which a paucity of ideas is cosmeticised in professional packaging and "A nice sound".

In a dumb kind of way, it's sharp thinking, and in a dumb kind of way this is quite a sharp, almost authoritative-sounding album; if you happen to be open to a straight dupe.

Peter Erskine

ARTHUR BLYTHE
Metamorphosis
(India Navigation Import)

ALTOMAN Arthur Blythe cut 'Lenox Avenue Breakdown' last year for CBS and it was one of the most joyously enthusiastic sessions in recent jazz, a continuous swinging groove. 'Metamorphosis' is by the group that made Blythe's captivating debut 'The Grip', this time in a live setting.

'Duet For Two' covers the first side and is the most complete demonstration of Blythe's powers yet available. Developing from a simple riff the huge, bearhugging sound pushes through endless permutations of the original idea. What impresses most is the spacing and control. Hollow raging is excised in favour of a measured ferocity that's infinitely more powerful; tonal distortion is kept to a minimum, the impact on arrival almost shockingly intense. Partnering on cello is Abdul Wadud, the perfect accompanist, scrabbled chords and guitar-like plucking scratching against the alto's majestic veneer.

'Metamorphosis' itself grips like a doberman. A nursery rhyme tune breaks into an ensemble passage of crazed fervour, Blythe holding off chaos by periodically dropping the theme back into the eye of the storm. A sudden stop before Ahmed Abdullah's trumpet crackles in to set them off again, then Blythe returns to restore order in a conclusion of quiet dignity. Gasp.

'Shadow' remains, a sonorous lamentation. Bob Stewart's tuba spryly buckdances around drummers Steve Reid and Muhammad Abdullah.

A towering programme makes for Black Arthur's third consecutive classic. Get back to basics for the boody thang.

Richard Cook

Pic: Harry Papadopoulos

Phil Mogg and Friend

Michael Chapman

and 'Oh Spartacus!' — nothing quite equals it for direction and clarity, the other numbers tending to meander and ramble.

That said, the album heralds the most welcome return we've seen in a long while. A more disciplined, less long-winded follow-up is worth looking forward to, and a new stage show too. Older and mellower Alex Harvey may be this time, but his humour and humanity should prove as useful to us as ever.

Paul Du Noyer

MICHAEL CHAPMAN
Fully Qualified Survivor
(Criminal)

QUESTION: Can a ten-year-old album by a singer-songwriter sort of acoustic chappie from Leeds hold any significance in the brave new world of Def Leppard and A Certain Ratio? Answer: probably not, but it's a shame.

'Fully Qualified Survivor' was Michael Chapman's second album, originally released on Harvest Records way back when. As British folkies go, Chapman deserved the kind of success that Al Stewart is currently enjoying: his best work has a directness, honesty and emotional power generally lacking in his more celebrated Anglo-American contemporaries.

This album contains some of his best work (the rest can be found on an exquisite but ignored pair of albums he made for Decca in the mid-'70s, 'Deal Gone Down' and 'Savage Amusement' by name). He plays an agile but thunderously powerful acoustic guitar, sings in a slurred, melancholy and seethingly angry monotone and drops bombs with titles like 'Stranger In The Room' on the unsuspecting listener.

On this album, Chapman took his first steps into rock and roll, aided by Mick Ronson (whose work on these sessions brought him to the attention of David Bowie *et al*) and the galloping rumbles of Britain's best-ever folk-rock bassist Rick Kemp. He never sold a lot of records and probably didn't care, but he did some of the best work ever recorded in his chosen field.

Chapman's work over the last few years has been less than impressive, but there's always hope. In the meantime those with a taste for cheap acoustic guitars and clenched teeth could do well to wander in this direction.

Charles Shaar Murray.

Perkins, one of various members of Muddy Waters' outfit present. The lineup itself provides the interest but this is negated by the fact that The Nighthawks leave themselves precious little room to move.

So Pinetop Perkins recreates 'Pintops Boogie Woogie' in all its 1928 splendour, guitarist Bob Margolin picks his way through 'Floyd's Guitar Blues', somebody remembers 'Dust My Broom', and a general blues history lesson takes place before your very ears, while The Nighhawks end up not so much a band as rather an open-mouthed support group. Duck this one then, but grab 'Open All Night' and 'Side Pocket Shot'. Meanwhile I'll continue my search for a copy of 'Nighthawks Live' (AD4110), which should be worth a twirl on the Victrola.

Among the collectibles emanating from the German Bear Family Label is 'That Rockin' Gal' by **Janis Martin,** who at 15 cut 'Drugstore Rock'n'Roll', a high-seller in 1956. Subsequently she received a dozen red roses from Elvis, which induced her to record 'My Boy Elvis', a sprightly slice of Nashville rock that included references to 'Mystery Train', 'Blue Suede Shoes' and other items from the Presley portfolio of golden goodies.

Nowadays it all seems rather tame, but 'Rockin' Gal', which includes 14 of the sides Martin cut in 1956-58 is an attractive enough sample of pop-rockabilly, even though someone has blown the very first track by including a rocked-up version of Duke Ellington's 'Squeeze Me' instead of the listed 'Love And Kisses'.

Fred Dellar

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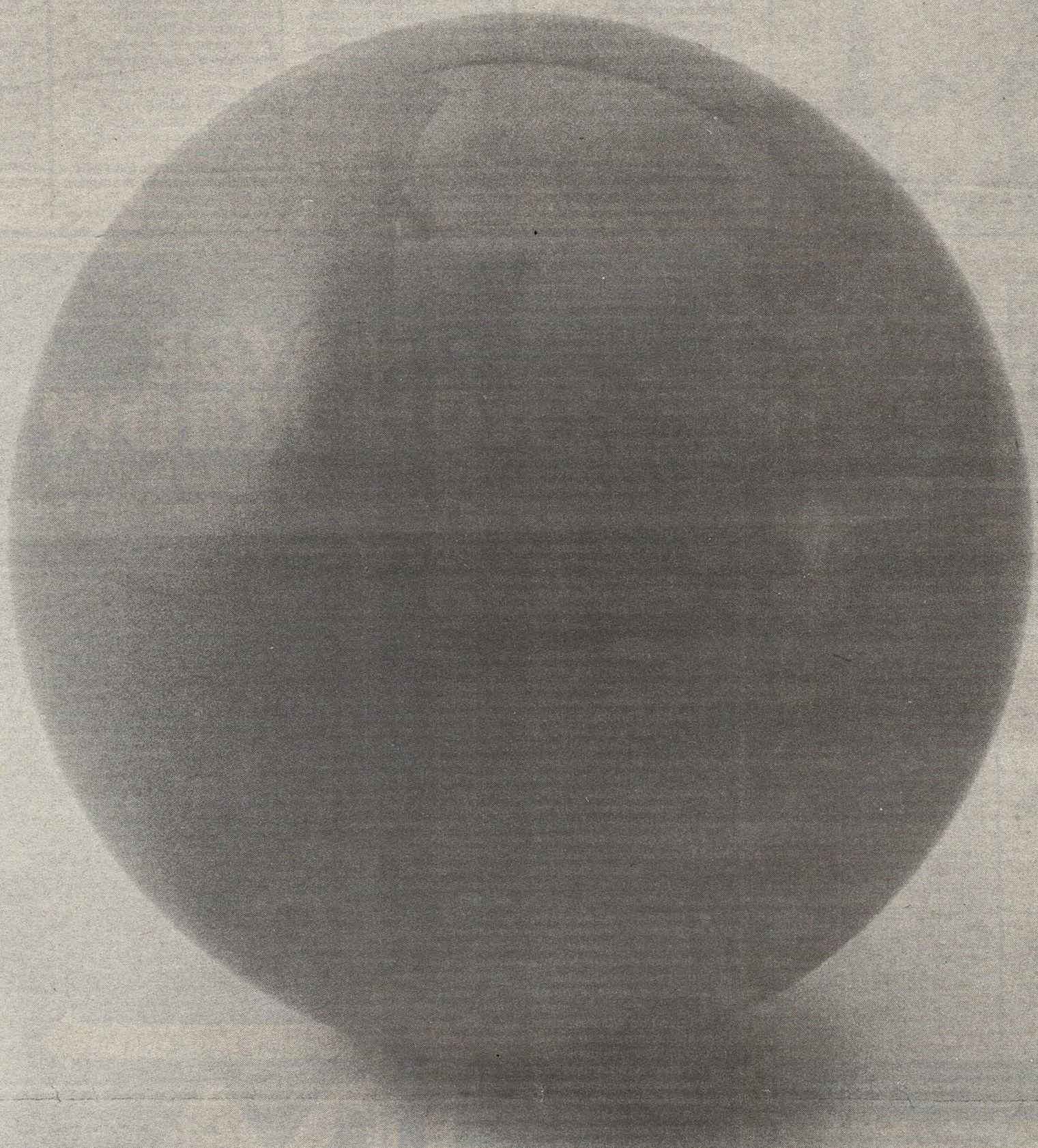

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GARP — A man without qualities?

ANDY GILL reviews the U.S. best seller

The World According To Garp
By John Irving
(Corgi £1.50)

HMMM . . . Some brouhaha 'bout this one when first published in hardback, and from where I'm sitting it's hard to see why: just another tiresome attempt to chisel some (fairly commonplace) insights into that old abstract dinosaur, the human condition in America today, yet another time-honoured tilt at "The Great American Novel" borne of longevity and lack of substance, like wading through a bowl of semolina to get at the blob of jam in the middle.

And what jam there is is thin and synthetic, reliant on the presentation of the plight of a single disturbed individual as an allegorical representation of the entire nation (bit of a sticky-wicket situation there, old chap), and proffering little in the way of volitional response other than continued sufferance of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Or, since this is a *modern* novel, and self-consciously so, let's say it views life as existential pinball, man at the mercy of the rollovers and flippers of outrageous fortune.

As the title suggests, the book deals with Garp's conception, life, death and eventual legacy. As Garp is — wouldn't you know it? — an author, Irving has plenty of scope for shovelling glimpses of causality into the ditch of his life by including sizeable chunks of Garp's stories, reflections of the interaction between man and environment: creative response seen as the spurting pus of a tightly-squeezed sensibility. Okay, but old hat.

In the tradition of much recent American fiction, it's long (at 570 pages, far too long for an adequate thumbnail synopsis), absurd and occasionally grotesque. Despite its plaudits, it's as mountainously insubstantial as a six-course Chinese meal — it sure *looks* heavy, in more than one sense, what with all the cover blurb about it being "the most talked-about novel since *Catch-22*", but it's really just a souffle, an airy confection which really shouldn't give you the slightest twinge of indigestion. (Are all these food-metaphors the stomach-cramps of a post-festivity dietary sensibility, doctor?).

The *Catch-22* comparison arises, I think, from the way the highly improbable is represented as the possible/actual. Where the comparison falls down is in the laboured construction of improbable situations in *Garp* and their faulty dovetailing into the believable substance of Garp's life: where Heller gains feasibility through humour, Irving goes to such lengths to make the absurd seem natural and "serious" that the reader's tempted to throw the book across the room in disgust. It neither rings true nor ultimately matters.

In its combination of absurdity, grotesquerie and readability, *Garp's* not unlike John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy* and *Sot-Weed Factor,* though Irving lacks Barth's erudition. Where he's got it over Barth, though, is in his humanity, his sympathy for his characters: he's obviously aware that the main criticism levelled at contemporaries like Barth, Pynchon and Heller is their lack of humanity and occasional *Grand Guignol* cruelty: "They're *my* characters, I'll do what I please to them!" Irving's undoubtedly cruel, but not coldly, unfeelingly so; when he hurts a character, the reader feels it, and there's no chance of detachment.

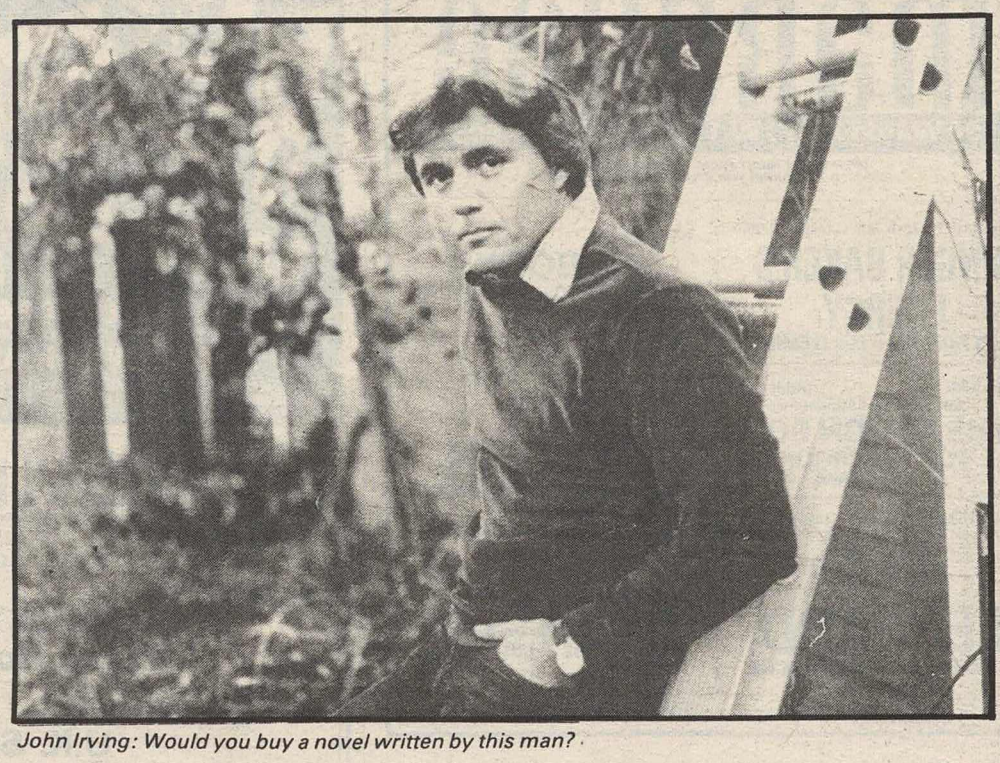
This is either Irving playing subtly on the heartstrings, or Irving wielding the big emotional stick. I tend towards the latter, because it's all done, really, for no particular reason.

In the final analysis, *Garp's* not so much the successor to *Catch-22* as a male variant of the vein plumbed so profitably by Erica Jong and Lisa Alther, with male anxiety and distrust replacing feminist lust for self-knowledge and self-determination: Garp's "Under Toad", as a symbol, is to this novel what Isadora's "flying zipless fuck" was to *Fear Of Flying* — a quest viewed with trepidation, or trepidation viewed as a quest.

So, is Irving banking on there being a backwash of male liberation (which does *not* mean chauvinism) following the current swash of feminism in America, a sudden interest in self-awareness on the part of the Yankee male (well, the New York intellectual variety, at least)? The whole certainly seems a bit too coldly calculated for comfort, though in his favour it has to be admitted that Irving treats feminism with a laudable level-headedness, balancing scorn and sympathy according to the degree of stupidity or sense exhibited by a particular feminist faction.

The World According To Garp shows Irving to be talented, in his fashion, but far from the genius fanfared by his publicity: his is more the talent of a journeyman — competent and calculating. (Economics Note: Our highly observant financial correspondent reports that the green-covered copy of *Garp* that he blagged during Corgi's pre-publication promotion giveaway of 5000 copies (by mailing a coupon in *Private Eye*) is marked at £1·25. The white-covered shop copies cost £1·50. Is this an instance of publishers creating white-elephant "collectors items", like record companies manufacture worthless vinyl collectables, or were Corgi caught wrong-footed in some inflationary spiral? We wonder. Twenty-five pence is twenty per cent of £1·25. Makes you think, eh?)

Andy Gill



John Irving: Would you buy a novel written by this man?

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LIVE MUSIC

01-261 6153

marquee

90 Wardour St., W.1 | 01-437 6603

OPEN EVERY NIGHT FROM 7.00 pm to 11.00 pm
REDUCED ADMISSION FOR STUDENTS AND MEMBERS

Thurs 24th Fri 25th Jan (Adm £2.00)
GINGER BAKER'S ENERGY
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

Sat 26th Jan (Adm £2.00)
Special Guest Appearance
THE ACTION BOYS
Plus THE CROOKS
+ IAN FLEMING

Sun 27th Mon 28th Jan (Adm £2.00)
DEF LEPPARD
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

Tues 29th Jan (Adm £1.00)
THE BOOKS
PLUS SUPPORT + JERRY FLOYD

Weds 30th Thurs 31st (Adm £1.50)
THE MEKONS
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

Fri 1st Sat 2nd Feb (Adm £2.00)
REVILLOS
PLUS FRIENDS + IAN FLEMING

HAMBURGERS AND OTHER HOT AND COLD SNACKS AVAILABLE

The Nashville

FULLERS TRADITIONAL ALES
OVER 20'S ONLY
CROMWELL RD./NORTH END RD. W14
WEST KENSINGTON TUBE (603 6071)

Thursday 24th January £1
R 'n' B Night
RUBBER JOHNNY + Support

Friday 25th January £1.50
THE HEADBOYS + Support

Saturday 26th January £1.50
ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80 + Support

Sunday 27th January £1.00
GOD'S TOYS + Small Hours

Monday 28th January £1.50
THE HEART DANCERS + The Upset

Tuesday 29th January £1
PHIL DANIELS & THE CROSS + The Act

Thursday 31st January £1
R 'n' B Night
THE BOGEY BOYS + Johnny G

CAROLINE Roadshow

Thursday 24th January **Lea's Cliff Hall, Sea Front, Folkestone, Kent.**	Friday 25th January **Talk Of The East, South Pier, Lowestoft, Suffolk**
Friday 1st February **Castle Hall, Hertford, Hertfordshire.**	Saturday 2nd February **Rhodes Hall, South Road, Bishops Stortford**
Friday 8th February **Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.**	Saturday 9th February **St. Ivo Centre, St. Ives, Cambridgeshire.**

Doors open 8pm. **D.J's Robb Eden, Roger Day & Brian Martin.**
We are Britain's most outrageous, Heavy Metal Roadshow. Adm £2.
To book the Caroline Roadshow Phone 0621-783-229.

FRIARS

AT THE MAXWELL HALL
AYLESBURY

Wednesday, January 23rd, 7.30pm
All The Way

THE RAMONES

plus The Boys
A.C. Sound and Vision
COMPLETELY SOLD OUT
Unfortunately no tickets will be available at door on night
This ain't Havana

STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

THE BEAT

U.B.40 the Akrylykz

ELECTRIC BALLROOM
184 CAMDEN HIGH ST. NW1 (NEAREST TUBE CAMDEN TOWN)
SATURDAY 26th JANUARY at 7·30
TICKETS £2·50 (INC.VAT) ADVANCE ELECTRIC BALLROOM BOX OFFICE, TEL: 485 9006
LONDON THEATRE BOOKINGS, SHAFTESBURY AVE., TEL: 439 3371; PREMIER BOX OFFICE, TEL: 240 2245,
OR ROCK ON RECORDS, 3 KENTISH TOWN RD., NW1, TEL: 485 5088

MUSIC MACHINE

CAMDEN HIGH ST. Opp. MORNINGTON CRESCENT TUBE
TEL: 01·387 0428/9

Thursday January 24th £1.70
BRIMSTONE + Pump House Gang

Saturday January 26th £2.50
U.K. SUBS + Spiders + Martian Dance

Monday January 28th £1.20
BEAT PILOTS AND THE BOSS PUSSIES + Night Doctor

Tuesday January 29th £1.20
GOD'S TOYS + Private Dicks + The Urge

Wednesday January 30th £1.20
DARLING + Spare Parts

Friday January 25th £2.20
Straight To The Heart Tour
DEXY'S MIDNIGHT RUNNERS + Guests

LICENSED BARS - LIVE MUSIC - DANCING
8pm - 2am MONDAY TO SATURDAY
OVER 18s ONLY

HOPE & ANCHOR
UPPER STREET
ISLINGTON, N.1

Wednesday 23rd January 75p **THE EXPRESSOS**	Sunday 27th January 75p **NUMBERS**
Thursday 24th January 75p **NINE BELOW ZERO**	Monday 28th January 75p **THE TEETH**
Friday 25th January £1 **BLAST FURNACE'S REVENGE**	Tuesday 29th January £1 **DOLLY MIXTURE**
Saturday 26th January £1 **LITTLE ROOSTERS**	Wednesday 30th January 75p **JOHNNY MARS' 7th SUN**

'NINE BELOW ZERO'
"ICE AGE TOUR"

24th Jan. Hope & Anchor, Islington.
25th Jan. Two Brewers, Clapham.
26th Jan. Bridgehouse, Canning Town.
27th Jan. Half Moon, Herne Hill.
29th Jan. Thomas 'A' Beckett, Old Kent Road.
31st Jan. White Lion, Putney.
1st Feb. Bedford College, N.W.1.
6th Feb. Rock Garden, W.1.
7th Feb. Nashville.
8th Feb. Two Brewers, Clapham.
E.P. available through C.B.S., ask for M.L.1 9 Below Zero

WINDSOR CASTLE
309 Harrow Road, W9

Wednesday 23rd Free
ONE EYED JACKS
Thursday 24th 50p
CARPETTES
Friday 25th 50p
ROARING 80's
The Madrigals
Saturday 26th 50p
LONDON ZOO
Sunday 27th Free
THE ZOOTS
Monday 28th Free
THE DIRECTIONS
Tuesday 29th Free
BADLANDS
Wednesday 30th Free
BILLY KARLOFF & THE SUPREMES.

Open till 12 Mon-Sat
Westbourne Park Tube
Close 10.30 Sun
01-286 8403

DUKE OF LANCASTER
Approach Road, NEW BARNET
(beside BR New Barnet)

Thursday 24th January
XEROES
Friday 25th January
JOY RIDE
Saturday 26th January
GUILT EDGE
Sunday 27th January
RED NITE
Tuesday 29th January
BACKLASH

THE BRIDGE HOUSE
23 BARKING ROAD, CANNING TOWN, E16

Thursday January 24th 50p
R 'n' B Night
LITTLE ROOSTERS
+ The Zoots

Friday January 25th 70p
ROLLS UP
+ Eddie Steady Go (Rock Poet)

Saturday January 26th 80p
THE BLUES BAND
+ Nine Below Zero

Sunday January 27th 60p
TOUR DE FORCE
+ One On One

Monday January 28th 70p
PHIL DANIELS AND THE CROSS + THE CIRCLES

Tuesday January 29th 50p
NETWORK
(ex Kinks, ex Foster Bros)
+ The Guvnors

Wednesday January 30th 50p
WASTED YOUTH
+ The Obvious

Thursday January 31st 60p
MO — DETTES
+ The Expressos

Outlaw and John Sherry present

WISHBONE ASH

Fairfield Halls Croydon
SUNDAY 3rd FEBRUARY 7·30pm
TICKETS £3·50, £3·00, £2·50 FROM BOX OFFICE & USUAL AGENTS

Please phone before setting out & check, but avoiding major disasters, here is:—

WHAT'S ON AT THE ROCKGARDEN

THE BOOKS
THU JAN 24. "More danceable than Talking Heads, whitier than Devo... reported Time Out.

QUADS
FRI JAN 25. £2·50. Manchester outfit with a full, fat, hard rock sound.

THE BRIAN KNIGHT BLUES BAND
DOORS OPEN 11AM SAT & SUN 4PM FRI
SAT. £2·50. Brian was there and playing in the first blues boom along with Korner, Davis, Jones, Wyman, Richard, etc.

LONDON ZOO!
SUN. 27th. £1·75. + SUPPORT.

MON. 28. £1·50. **THE BRAINIACS**

CHARLIE GILLETS OVAL TUESDAY.

BOBBY HENRY & THE SILVER SPACE VIRGINS
TUES. 29th 7·30pm till 12.

THE THUNDERBIRDS
WED. Late 60's soul combo. fun & dance nite

VALENTINES
THU JAN 31. "Energy, Enjoyment, Tightness." MUSICIANS' SOCIETY

The Doors open 8·45 till late, except Sunday when its 7·30 till 12. Real Ale & Cocktails right thru. Our restaurant is open 8·30 A.M till last orders at 11·45 P.M. Monday thru Saturday. We are on the corner of King St. & James St. old Covent Garden (100 mt. from tube Station).
PHONE: 240·3961

FOOL
AT THE TRAFALGAR
Sat. Jan. 26th
Sat. Feb. 9th
Sat. Feb. 16th
Shepherds Bush Shopping Centre

PTARMIGAN
LIVE! AT THE *John Peel* Gosport
FRIDAY JANUARY 25th
(Band Enquiries Emsworth 3537)

THE Venue

160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500

Tickets from The Venue Box Office and the Ticket Machine in the Virgin Megastore, 14 Oxford Street, W.1. Postal Applications (P.O's only) from The Venue.

Food, Drink, Live Bands, Dancing 7pm-3am.

Wed 23rd Jan £3.00
THE INMATES
+ 9 Below Zero

Thurs 24th Jan £3.50
SUZI QUATRO
+ Blizzard

Fri 25th - Mon 28th Jan £5.00
DARRYL HALL & JOHN OATES
Sat & Sun Sold Out
2 Shows Fri & Mon

Tues 29th Jan £3.50
EDDIE GRANT
& The Front Line Orchestra

Wed 30th Jan £3.50
JAPAN

Thurs 31st Jan £3.00
THE SPRING CRUISE
Featuring the Blues Band, Stonebridge McGuinness, and the Dance Band

Fri 1st Feb £3.00
ASWAD

Sat 2nd Feb £3.25
KOKOMO

Sun 3rd Feb £3.50
ROCKET '88
Featuring: Chris Farlowe, George Green, Bob Hall, Colin Hodgkinson, Alexis Korner, Dick Morrissey, John Pickard, Ian Stewart & Charlie Watts.
+. Blast Furnace's Revenge

Wed 6th Feb £3.00
THE SMIRKS
+ Gods Toys + Aragon

Thurs 7th Feb
Special farewell concert
By arrangement with Shirley S. Kruger
MARVIN GAYE
POSTPONED

THE PORTERHOUSE
20 Carolgate, Retford, Notts.
Tel. 0777 704981.

Friday January 25th Adm. £1.50
THE VIBRATORS
Saturday January 26th Adm. £2.00
Tom Robinson's
SECTOR 27

THE PRETENDERS, *fronted as ever by* ***Chrissie Hynde*** *(left), celebrate their No. 1 chart status by going on the road — their major tour opens at Portsmouth (Tuesday) and Keele (Wednesday) . . .* ***ROCKPILE*** *(above), featuring* ***Dave Edmunds*** *and* ***Nick Lowe,*** *also set out this week with initial gigs at Newcastle (Friday), Nottingham (Saturday), Exeter (Monday) and Reading (Tuesday).*

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Compiled by Derek Johnson

Thursday

Basildon Double Six: **Bastille**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **The Clinic**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
Blackpool Norbreck Castle: **Toyah**
Bournemouth Stateside Centre: **The Beat / The Heat**
Bradford Princeville: Leargo
Burntwood Troubador: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
Cambridge Great Northern Hotel: **Hopo**
Coventry Dog & Trumpet: **The Rackets**
Croydon The Cartoon: **The Dance Band**
Derby Blue Note: **UB 40**
Dundee Art Centre: **Friction**
Dundee Caird Hall: **Wishbone Ash / The Dukes**
Glasgow Doune Castle: **Restricted Code**
Gravesend Red Lion: **Blitz!**
Guildford Civic Hall: **Gang Of Four**
Guildford Wooden Bridge: **The Small Wonders**
Hanley The Place: **Medium Waveband** (for three days)
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Athletico Spizz 80**
Hull University: **The Piranhas**
Kidderminster Irish Club: **The Stains**
Leamington Spa Crown Hotel: **Ice**
Leeds Peel Hotel: **Spyder Blues Band**
Leicester Polytechnic: **Osibisa**
Liverpool Eric's: **999**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Mickey Dread**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Little Roosters**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Phil Daniels & The Cross**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Books**
London Deptford Albany Empire: **The Realists / Spare Parts / The Flatbackers**
London Hammersmith Odeon: **Barclay James Harvest**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **9 Below Zero**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Lacey's Allstars**
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Untouchables**
London Marquee Club: **Ginger Baker's Energy**
London Putney Half Moon: **The Q-Tips**
London Shepherds Bush Trafalgar: **Speedball**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn / Tony Lee Trio**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **Rockhouse/Rusty & The Renegades**
London Stoke Newington The Pegasus: **The O.K. Band**
London Tottenham The Spurs: **Lamella**
London Victoria The Venue: **Suzi Quatro**
London Waterloo Royal Victoria: **Freddy's Feetwarmers**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Mark Andrews & The Gents**
London W.14 The Kensington: **The Brainiac 5**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Big Chief**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Drug Squad**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gaffa**
Nottingham University: **The Mob / Androids Of Mu / Zounds**
Oxford Corn Dolly: **Never Never**
Paisley The Bungalow: **Scotch**
Poole Arts Centre: **Robin Trower**
Portsmouth Cumberland Tavern: **Thieves Like Us**
Portsmouth Guildhall: **The Ramones / The Boys**
Portsmouth Palmerston Hotel: **Sly Scandal**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Little Fish**
Preston The Warehouse: **Art Failure**
Rayleigh Crocs: **Sta-Press / Steve Hooker Band / School Bullies**
Reading Cap & Gown: **Dave Evans**
Sheffield Limit Club: **Tom Robinson's S27**
Sheffield The Penguin: **Geddes Axe**
Sunderland Fusion Disco: **Excel**

Friday

Aberdeen Capitol Theatre: **Wishbone Ash / The Dukes**
Altrincham Silver Wings Club: **Roaring Jelly**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Bright Eyes**
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **The Traitors**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **No Faith**
Birmingham Odeon: **UFO/Girl**
Birmingham University: **Gang Of Four / Au Pairs**
Blackburn King George's Hall: **The Clash**
Bracknell South Hill Park: **The Blues Band**
Bradford College Queens Hall: **Spinoes / Press Release**
Bradford Topic Folk Club: **Cauldron**
Brentwood Hermit Club: **Deep Throats / Bastille**
Brighton Alhambra: **The Guvnors**
Brighton Gardner Centre: **Gordon Giltrap**
Brighton Lewes Rd. Inn: **Matchbox / Rusty & The Renegades**
Brighton Susses Sports Centre: **Vandells / The Chefs**
Bristol Colston Hall: **Barclay James Harvest**
Bristol University: **Robin Trower**
Cambridge International Centre: **The Lonely / Roger & The Bannisters / The Underachievers**
Coventry Ryton Bridge: **Streetlite**
Dundee Technical College: **Friction**
Folkestone Royal Norfolk: **Denigh**
Grantham Dysart Centre: **The Olde English Pub Band**
Guildford Surrey University: **Osibisa**
Hull College: **Screen Idols**
Immingham Civic Hall: **The Alwoodley Jets / Bombers UK**
Kidderminster College of Further Education: **Athletico Spizz 80**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Excel**
Liverpool Eric's: **The Bogey Boys**
London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
London Acton Oak Tree: **The Q-Tips**
London Camden Centre: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Revelation / The Prime Movers**
London Camden Music Machine: **Dexy's Midnight Runners / The Black Arabs / The Nips**
London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Roll Ups**
London Clapham Two Brewers: **9 Below Zero**
London Clapham 101 Club: **God's Toys**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Quads**
London Deptford Arms: **Bloodshot**
London Elephant & Castle Southbank Polytechnic: **Electrotunes**
London Fulham Golden Lion: **The Little Roosters**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Tennis Shoes**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Micky Jones Band**
London Holborn Princess Louise: **The Scoop**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Blast Furnace's Revenge**
London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
London Kensington The Nashville: **The Headboys**
London Marquee Club: **Ginger Baker's Energy**
London New Cross Royal Albert: **Rubber Johnny**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
London School of Economics: **The Passions**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Betty Smith Quintet**
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: **McFadden & Whitehead**
London Victoria The Venue: **Daryl Hall & John Oates**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **The Soft Boys / Scissor Fits / El Seven**
London Westminster Bridge Rd. The Towers: **The Rockin' Shades**
London W.C.1 New Merlin's Cave: **Esmond Selwyn's Jazz Fabrique**
Loughborough University: **Renaissance**
Manchester Polytechnic: **The Mekons**
Marham Grafton Club: **Canned Rock**
Newcastle Mayfair Ballroom: **AC/DC**
Newcastle Polytechnic: **Rockpile featuring Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe**
Newcastle-under-Lyme Hemstal Inn: **Ice**
Newport Harper Adams College: **The Vye**
Oldham Tower Club: **Def Leppard**
Oxford Polytechnic: **Billy Karloff Band/Hi-Tension**
Retford Porterhouse: **The Regulars / The Agents**
Sheffield Crazy Daisy: **The Salford Jets**
Stroud Subscription Rooms: **The Modettes**
Sunderland Annabelles: **Flying Saucers**
Sunderland Mayfair: **Leargo**
Truro Punchbowl & Ladle: **Metro Glider**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **The Photos**
Weston-super-Mare Webbington Country Club: **Dave Berry**
Winchester Railway inn: **Dave Evans**
Wolverhampton Lafayette: **UB 40**

Saturday

Ayr Darlington Hotel; **The Marvelettes**
Barkingside Old Maypole: **The Rockin' Shades**
Bath Centre 69: **Program /Vice Squad**
Bath YMCA: **Powerglide**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Strider**
Birmingham Odeon: **UFO / Girl**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **School Sports**
Birmingham The Lion: **The Stains**
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: **Osibisa**
Brighton The Northern: **Airport**
Bromley William Morris Hall: **Self Indulgence / Teachers Pet**
Burntwood Troubadour: **Leargo**
Canterbury Kent University: **The Photos**
Chatham Tam O'Shanter: **Denigh**
Chester Deeside Leisure Centre: **The Clash**
Colchester Essex University: **Renaissance**
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: **The Details**
Cuckfield Kings Head: **Sly Scandal**
Eastbourne Lottbridge Arms: **Lamella**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Wishbone Ash / The Dukes**
Harlow The Essex Hall: **The Gangsters**
Hastings Falaise Hall: **Nik Turner's Inner City Unit / The Good Missionaries**
Hastings Pier Pavilion: **The Mods / The Body Snatchers**
Hollywell Assembly Hall: **The Small Hours**
Huddersfield Polytechnic: **Toyah**
Immingham County Hotel: **The Classics**
Knaresborough Mitre Hotel: **Mirror Boys**
Leeds Staging Post: **Shake Appeal**
Leeds University: **The Ramones / The Boys**
Letchworth Youth Club: **The Mob / Androids Of Mu / Zounds**
Lincoln Monks Rd. Club: **Strange Days**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Revelation / The Prime Movers**
London Camden Electric Ballroom: **The Beat / UB40 / Akrylykz**
London Camden Music Machine: **UK Subs / Spiders / Martian Dance**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Blues Band / 9 Below Zero**
London Chiswick John Bull: **Jeep**
London Clapham 101 Club: **The Soft Boys / The Directions**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Brian Knight Blues Band**
London Crystal Palace Hotel: **The Face**
London Hammersmith Lyric Theatre (lunchtime, free): **Bob Kerr's Jazz Friends**
London Hammersmith The Swan: **First Aid**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **Electrotunes**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Little Roosters**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Athletico Spizz 80 / The Nips**
London Manor Park Three Rabbits: **Bastille**
London North-East Polytechnic: **Canned Rock**
London Paddington The Chippenham: **Flat Earth**
London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House: **Mr Gladstone's Bag**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Jay McShann Trio**
London Southall Hamboro' Tavern: **Spider**
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Big Chief**
London W.1 Portman Hotel: **Dick Wellstood**
Loughborough University: **Gang Of Four / Au Pairs**
Luton The Royal Club: **UK Decay**
Maidstone East Farleigh Hall: **Blitz**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **999**
Newcastle University: **Def Leppard**
Norwich University of East Anglia: **The Revillos**
Nottingham University: **Rockpile featuring Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe**
Oxford Board Hotel: **Never Never**
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: **Strypes**
Reading Hexagon Theatre: **Robin Trower**
Sheffield Broadfield Hotel: **Spasms**
Sheffield Crazy Daisy: **The Salford Jets**
St. Austell New Cornish Riviera: **Suzi Quatro**
St. Austell Polgooth Inn: **Metro Glider**
Stockton The Teessider: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Tamworth Glascot Club: **Ice**
Taunton Market House: **Sledgehammer**
Weston-super-Mare Webbington Country Club: **Dave Berry**
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): **The Pests**
Wolverhampton Polytechnic: **George Melly & The Feetwarmers**
York College of Ripon & St. John: **The Headboys**

Sunday

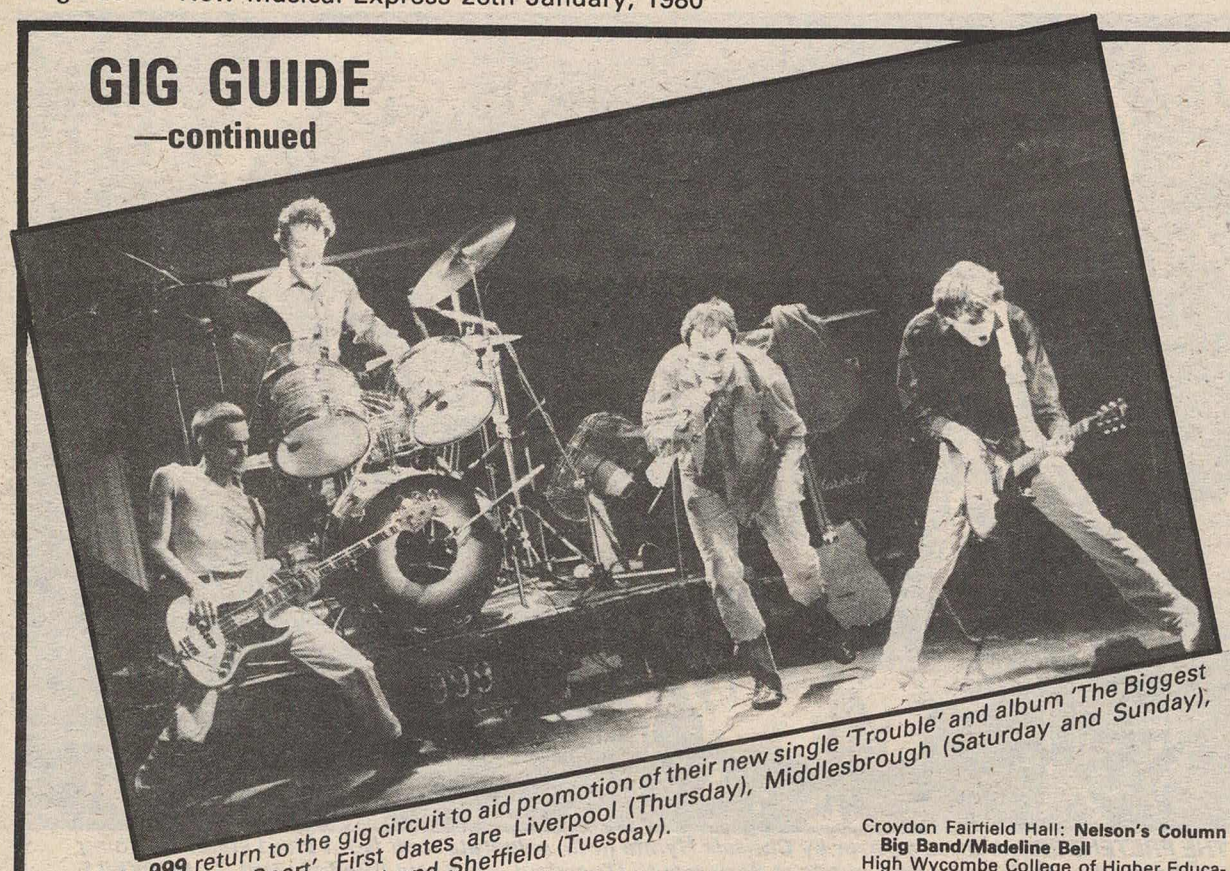
Banff Fife Lodge Hotel: **Scotch**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Prima Donna**
Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: **The Crack**
Birmingham (Yardley) The Swan: **Video**
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre: **The Mob/Androids Of Mu/Zounds**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Proposition 31**
Bradford Princeville (lunchtime): **Press Release**
Bridgend Railway Inn: **Dave Evans**
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): **Bill Scott & Ian Ellis**
Coventry Theatre: **UFO/Girl**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Osibisa**
Cumbernauld Theatre: **Exposure**
Edinburgh Harvey's: **Razor/Trax/The Prats**
Edinburgh Odeon: **The Ramones/The Boys**
Glasgow Countdown (Mars Bar): **Restricted Code**
Harrow Queens Arms: **The Q-Tips**
High Wycombe Nags Head: **Tom Robinson's S27**
Ilford The Cranbrook: **First Aid**
Leeds Fan Club: **Toyah**
Leeds Haddon Hall: **The Vye**
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Windows**
Leeds Staging Post: **Winker**
Liverpool Empire Theatre: **Wishbone Ash/The Dukes**
Loftus West Road Club: **Vardis**
London Battersea Nags Head: **Jugular Vein**
London Bethnal Green The Green Gate: **Nightbird**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Blues Band**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Tour De Force**
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: **The Invisibles (for four days)**
London Clapham 101 Club: **Tennis Shoes**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **London Zoo**
London Finchley Torrington: **The Dance Band**
London Herne Hill Half Moon: **9 Below Zero**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Numbers**
London Kensington The Nashville: **God's Toys/The Small Hours**
London Marquee Club: **Def Leppard**
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: **Rednite**
London North End Rd. The Cock: **Aura**
London Putney Half Moon: **Rocket 88**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Fred Hunt**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Splodgenessabounds/The Twits /Rodney & The Failures**
London W.1 Portman Hotel (lunchtime): **Mike & Lizzie McKenzie**
Maidstone Royal Albion: **The Pulsaters (lunchtime)/The Frames (evening)**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Barclay James Harvest**
Middlesbrough Empire: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **999**
Newquay Central Hotel: **The Winners**
Norwich Cottage Tavern: **Jane Bond & The Agents**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Medium Medium**
Poynton Folk Centre: **Ossian**
Reading Cherrys Wine Bar: **The Meanies**
Sheffield Top Rank: **The Clash**
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **AC/DC**
Uxbridge Brunel University: **The Little Roosters**
Walsall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Monday

Birmingham Sheldon Club: **The Stains**
Birmingham Top Rank: **Gangsters**
Birmingham Tyburn House: **Ice**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **Oral Sax**
Canterbury Kent University: **The Frames**
Doncaster Institute: **Toyah**
Edinburgh Buster Brown's: **The Solos**
Edinburgh Tiffany's: **999**
Exeter University: **Rockpile featuring Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe**
Glasgow Apollo Centre: **The Ramones/The Boys**

CONTINUES OVER . . .

GIG GUIDE
—continued



999 return to the gig circuit to aid promotion of their new single 'Trouble' and album 'The Biggest Prize In Sport'. First dates are Liverpool (Thursday), Middlesbrough (Saturday and Sunday), Edinburgh (Monday) and Sheffield (Tuesday).

Hull Wellington Club: **The Alwoodley Jets/Bombers UK**
Ilford Cauliflower Hotel: **Original East Side Stompers**
Leeds Fforde Green Hotel: **Flying Saucers**
Leicester Skants: **Intestines/Dangerous Girls**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Electrotunes-/Micky Dorie & The Sirens/One Hand Clapping**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Brainiac 5**
London Deptford Albany Empire: **9 Below Zero**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Billy Karloff Band**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **The Rackets**
London Highgate Jacksons Rock Club: **Tom Robinson's S27/Zero Zero**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Red Beans & Rice**
London Marquee Club: **Def Leppard**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **The O.K. Band**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Penny Royal**
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: **The Mob/Androids Of Mu/Zounds**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Barclay James Harvest**
Manchester Band On The Wall: **Pure Product**
Manchester Golden Garter: **The Chi-Lites (for a week)**
Newcastle Allendale Community Centre: **The Noise Toys/Arthur 2-Stroke**
Norwich University of East Anglia: **The Mekons**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **The Party**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Gwaihir**
Reading Cherry's: **El Seven**
Sheffield City Hall: **UFO/Girl**
Southend Zero 6: **Bastille**

Tuesday

Birmingham Fighting Cocks: **Brujo**
Birmingham Mercat Cross: **Killer**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Speed Limit**
Bradford College Vaults Bar: **'A' One**
Bradford St. George's Hall: **The Clash**
Bury The Derby Hall: **The Reducers**
Cambridge Midland Tavern: **Hopo**
Canterbury Art College: **The Frames**
Croydon Fairfield Hall: **Nelson's Column Big Band/Madeline Bell**
High Wycombe College of Higher Education: **The Mob/Androids Of Mu/Zounds**
Kingston Polytechnic: **Dave Evans**
Leicester De Montfort Hall: **Wishbone Ash/The Dukes**
Leicester University: **Robin Trower**
Liverpool The Masonic: **The Accelerators**
London Camden Brecknock: **First Aid**
London Camden Dingwalls: **The Mo-dettes**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Bobby Henry & The Risk/The Space Virgins**
London Fulham Greyhound: **Never Never**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Badlands**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Dolly Mixture**
London Kensington The Nashville: **Phil Daniels & The Cross/The Act**
London N.4 The Stapleton: **Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn/Brian Lemon Trio**
London Victoria The Venue: **Eddie Grant**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Max Collie Rhythm Aces**
London W.1 Dean St. Billy's Club: **Bauhaus/Filter**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **UFO/Girl**
Newcastle City Hall: **The Ramones/The Boys**
Norwich Cromwells: **Dimitri/The Toffs**
Nottingham Trent Polytechnic: **Toyah**
Paisley The Bungalow: **Restricted Code**
Portsmouth Locarno: **The Pretenders**
Radcliffe-on-Trent British Legion: **Dave Berry**
Reading University: **Rockpile featuring Dave Edmunds & Nick Lowe**
Sheffield Blitz (George IV Inn): **They Must Be Russians**
Sheffield Limit Club: **The Little Roosters**
Sheffield Top Rank: **999**
Walsall Dirty Duck: **The Amazing Dark Horse**

Wednesday

Bedworth Cuttalong Inn: **Ice**
Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Brujo**
Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Rainmaker**
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: **Roses**
Bridlington Spa Royal Hall: **The Clash**
Bristol Stonehouse: **'A' Block**
Carmarthen College: **UB 40**
Chelmsford Chelmer Institute: **Bastille / Brian Cookman**
Cheltenham Plough Inn: **Roadsters**
Colchester Essex University: **Osibisa**
Coventry City Centre Club: **Gangsters**
Darlington New Imperial: **Carl Green & The Scene**
Derby Assembly Rooms: **Wishbone Ash / The Dukes**
Dorking Hospital Social Club: **Dave Evans**
Hemel Hempstead Dacorum College: **Flat Earth**
Keele University: **The Pretenders**
Liverpool University: **The Ramones / The Boys**
Loftus West Road Club: **The Accelerators**
London Camden Dingwalls: **Tribesman**
London Canning Town Bridge House: **Wasted Youth**
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Thunderbirds / Mystery Girls**
London Enfield Middlesex Polytechnic: **The Mob / Androids Of Mu / Zounds**
London Fulham Greyhound: **The Small Hours**
London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Billy Karloff Band**
London Islington Hope & Anchor: **Johnny Mars' 7th Sun**
London Knightsbridge The Grove: **Free Beer**
London Marquee Club: **The Mekons**
London Putney Star & Garter: **Dana Simmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues Showcase**
London School of Economics: **The Chefs**
London Soho Pizza Express: **Al Cohn / Brian Lemon Trio**
London Southall White Hart: **Gina 'n' The Rockin' Rebels**
London Victoria The Venue: **Japan**
London West Hampstead Moonlight Club: **Athletic Spizz 80 / The Dials**
London Wimbledon F. C. Nelson's Club: **Gordon Hunte's Sox**
London Woolwich Tramshed: **Tour De Force**
London W.1 Dean St. Billy's Club: **Bauhaus/In Camera**
Manchester Apollo Theatre: **UFO / Girl**
Norwich East Anglia University: **Robin Trower**
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Gwaihir**
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Some Chicken**
Nottingham Trent Polytechnic: **Ronnie Lane Band**
Portland Flying Fish Club: **Canned Rock**
Reading Hexagon Theatre: **Gordon Giltrap**
Sheffield University: **The Piranhas**
South Woodford Railway Bell: **Original East Side Stompers**
St. Albans Horn Of Plenty: **The Q-Tips**
Stratford-on-Avon Toll House: **The Rockin' Shades**
Swinton Duke of Wellington: **The Trend**
Walsall West Midlands College: **High Flames**

NEW YORK GIG GUIDE
Compiled by Joe Stevens

MONDAY (28): My Father's Place — **The Buicks;** Marty's — **Helen Humes** (six days); Sweet Basil — **Charles Davies;** Lone Star Cafe — **Carl Perkins/Buzz & The Flyers;** Pin Palace — **Ahmed Abdullah;** Syncopation — **Smokey Stevens.**
TUESDAY (29): Hurrah — **Rhys Shatham/Glenn Branca;** Grand Finale — **Rip Taylor** (six days); Lone Star Cafe — **The Kendalls/Eddie Condon;** Gildersleeves — **Pin-Ups;** Sweet Basil — **Ron Carter;** Trax — **Monarch;** CBGB's — **Star Toon;** Stars — **William Oz;** My Father's Place — **The Line;** Fat Tuesday's — **Jack De Johnettes.**
WEDNESDAY (30): Hurrah — **2 Vous;** Les Mouches — **Lois St Lois** (four days); My Father's Place — **Sudden Impact;** Syncopation — **Eddie Heywood** (six days); Lone Star Cafe — **Billy Joe Shaver.**
THURSDAY (31): Hurrah — **Human Sexual Response/The 80's;** Carnegie Hall — **Craig Russell;** Fast Lane — **John Mayall/The All Stars;** Forest Lodge — **Sea Level;** Avery Fisher — **Sarah Vaughan;** Tramps — **Voodoo Shoes;** Trax — **The Features.**
FRIDAY (1): Main Point — **Allen Ginsberg;** Englewood N.J. — **The Necessaries-/Voodoo Shoes/Avis Davis & Joy Rider/The 80's;** Hurrah — **Gary Valentine/Student Teachers** (two days); Bottom Line — **Gary Burton/Roy Haynes** (two days); Beacon — **Weather Report** (two days); Town Hall — **Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee;** Washington Irving H.S. — **John Hartford;** Stars — **Doug Sahm.**
SATURDAY (2): Carnegie Hall — **Rick Danko/The McGarrigles/Paul Butterfield;** Capitol — **Atlanta Rhythm Section/38 Special.**
SUNDAY (3): Sweet Basil — **Jay Clayton** (two days); Tramps — **Chelsea Funk Orchestra;** Alice Tulley — **Levine, Gniewek & Silberstein;** My Father's Place — **Good Rats.**

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Live page

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16 Madness
17 Linda Lewis
18 The Clash
22/23 Ramones
22 Spyro Gyra
24 Sammy Hagar
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28 Planxty

MARCH
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6 Tom Petty
9 Squeeze
10 Ian Gillan
11/12 Peter Gabriel
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LIVE!

Two moles called Johnny and Joey. Pic Anton Corbijn

The delinquent dimbos scamper out of their tunnel

The Ramones

Cambridge

LEATHERY black and sweat-shined, with eight legs and four heads (and a sneer on every one); they say it don't think so good but, jeez, you wanna see it move. The Ramones say: "Hey ho, let's go!" and go and go and go straight forward, no left or right, no stopping. It's rock'n'roll as an endless tunnel — dig it!

Where those other moles go under (this is Cambridge) that's where our Ramonic tunnellers go public, surfacing slack-jawed and a blinking in the half-light, to heroes' welcome and some spit.

And all the mail-order punks shout "Hey ho, let's go!", because the occasion's really a two-way trade in stereotypes and cliches. (This *is* the Corn Exchange.)

For all we can tell, Joey Ramone might be *thinking* "Ho hum" but you just *know* he'll go "Hey ho", no matter what, because The Ramones are The World's Most Dependable Group. It's half their charm, and maybe four-fifths of their difficulty. Formulas wear thin, even the divine ones, like Joey's jeans; there might be holes that no-one, including Phil Spector, can patch up for much longer.

But let's go! 'Blitzkrieg Bop', 'Rockaway Beach', 'Rock'n'Roll High School', 'Gimme Gimme Shock Treatment' and 'I Wanna Be Sedated' are rushed off in the space of minutes, only to rumble about and out the cold and cavernous hall, and the sound seeps away to dissolve somewhere above the sedate(d) town outside. And by the time the kids have cheered for that much the band have finished two more, 'Do You Remember Rock'n'Roll Radio?' and 'She's The One'.

And Sheena's still a punk rocker after all this time while Suzy remains a headbanger and Jackie and Judy, the punk and the runt, get around like they always used to as well. The hits and the myth just keep on coming, thick and fast, in a breathless blur of noise . . . with only a panic-quick "Wontoofreeforr!" to save every damn thing from crashing headlong into the next one like a motorway pile-up.

'Pinhead' with its time-honoured 'Gabba gabba hey' sign waved proudly aloft to so much ceremony and acclaim you'd think it actually meant something, 'Let's Dance' the mangled Montez toe-tapper, the boys' own 'Chinese Rock', 'I Wanna' this and 'I Don't Wanna' that ... The Ramones throw the song-book at us. (The official estimate for tonight was 36 numbers and I ain't arguing.)

Against an emblazoned backdrop of the presidential US eagle — meant patriotically rather than satirically — the four play their familiar roles as fun-loving delinquent dimbos out on a joy-ride, the costumes and haircuts as basic and unchanged as the music itself. Joey Ramone is a system of human scaffolding; long and angled, he lurches and leans, expression blank. The rest — drummer Marky, Dee Dee on bass and Johnny the guitarist — strike up their poses and then get down to pouring out that sound.

It's an act, of course; a set-piece from one end to the other, and as limited as it's perfect. There isn't a lot left to be done with it except parade it around as an institution and depend on familiarity not to breed too fast. There's a whiff of indifference about this show that can grow to be a bit oppressive, as if sheer speed's enough to guarantee vitality, as if blinkered single-mindedness must signify commitment.

'End Of The Century' might see The Ramones resolve their problems on record (more thanks to Spectoresque intervention than to their more ambitious and correspondingly more obnoxious lyrics), but live they're still going through old motions. When the last of that famous cartoon / conceptualist appeal has faded will there be anything left underneath apart from a '76 vintage boogie machine, greasy but creaking?

It was often said that rock needed The Ramones, but that can hardly be the case any more. Maybe they've been down that tunnel too long to picture themselves anywhere else; but the air must be getting stale down there by now.

When are those boys of Mrs Ramone really going to leave home?

Paul Du Noyer

Angelic Upstarts

Manchester

HALF the fun of seeing The Angelic Upstarts is hearing the dedications at the beginning of each number: "This is for all the skinheads and punks and it's called 'Fuck The Mods' We're The Young Ones!" Or, "This is for my brother who's going to jail for attempted murder!"

Outrage provoking outrage, it was good to hear one member of the audience complaining about the door price, which turned out to be more than the advertised two quid. "Two fifty! You bastard!"

"If you don't like the money," Mensi replied, "fuck off. This song is called 'Ronnie Is A Rocker!' "

Ronnie is the new bassist and very nearly as much the centre of onstage attention as Mensi. He looks like and is an ex-Ted, but his elegant and aloof aggression (grey velvet collar jacket, stern expression) doesn't quite match up to Mensi's impression of someone throwing a fit.

And that's what it's all about — the appearance of uncontrolled, vengeful, pissed-upon, pissed-up blokes fulfilling the prophecy of 'Teenage Warning', the Upstarts' essential single.

On one level I can understand what they mean. Tonight summarizes one aspect of modern British rock — the way in which it's becoming more class oriented. This, for instance, is one of Manchester's Moss Side nights, the support band being locals Armed Force and the crowd coming mainly from that area too.

The atmosphere is of old-time, straightforward punk. The kids are here because these particular bands are on, but the closure of most of the clubs in town and the change in musical styles has left them in the cold.

All of which is emphasised by the way in which the Upstarts start off by being exciting but half way through begin to sound like cliched heavy metal. It's a routine punctuated by Mensi harping on about being a loser and the band being banned in many places.

"I'm not gonna preach and preach," Mensi says. "This is our first gig for a long time. I don't want any injuries on my conscience. If you're gonna fight I'm gonna finish. I can't play London, I can't play Birmingham. I'm gonna fuck off and I fucking mean it."

There wasn't much fighting despite the feeling that there might have been. The band dive headlong into their string of same-sounding, defensive songs, which at once stand as a threat to the outside world and a plea of innocence. They effectively debunk most forms of organisation in their efforts to reflect the standpoint of the average working class kid but by the time it's all over there isn't much hope left for anyone.

'Student Power', say, demolishes the introspective politics of one sector but also attacks the TUC generally. All tarred with the same brush, the reduction is complete. There's only the disenchanted mass and its wrongly-accused, angelic figurehead, someone like Mensi, Lydell Towers, or . . . Rudolph Hess. Yes, one song is about him, and *that* doesn't make me any happier.

The audience's response, however, is half-hearted. Their adoration only lasts as long as the guitar is pounding and Mensi is moving. Coming back on stage, the band do 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' and 'I'm An Upstart' and, finally, they sound good.

They can entertain, and I think that's all. Their picture of doomed heroes, dying with both guns blazing, is timelessly appealing, but like Bill Sykes, it won't get you anywhere and I suspect that might worry them eventually.

That no-nonsense style of music may be one of the basic forms of rock'n'roll expression but in this context it's cul-de-sac, and the audience who are well-used to it, intolerant of much else, will still get bored.

After all, they aren't made to feel any more dignified about themselves. You just feel as if you don't matter.

Bob Dickinson

Red Beans And Rice

The Nashville

EXCEPT for the criminally neglected Soulyard, Red Beans And Rice are probably the most enjoyable soul band around just now. Lacking a little of the former's flair and versatility, RB&R all but compensate with a directness and attack that socks it stra-a-ight atcha on the mainline, heart-to-heart.

The Beans were up and bouncing at The Nashville, through a sweat'n'stomp show of oldtime blues, rocking roll and sweet sweet soul that had the small but enthusiastic crowd demanding more long after the plugs and last pints had been pulled.

The band had earned their ovation with a tight, hard-working set that evoked memories of Stax and Chess and the golden age of rampant R&B — a turbulent, bluesy drive through 'Walking By Myself', an impassioned 'Shake', a gritty 'Lucille', a blistering, sax-fuelled 'Poke It Up Buttercup'.

RB&R's chief asset is their musical empathy and expertise.

Tom Riley, a stalwart of British soul, lays down the backbone of the beat, frequently drumming up a storm with just a flick of his wrists; Benny Herbert, on bass, lends solid support; guitarist Jeff Coleman contributes appropriately stinging runs; Mike Paice blows superb honking, squawking sax; and front man LaVerne Brown bounds fervently around the stage, pausing only to exhort and exclaim like the Reddings and Picketts of old.

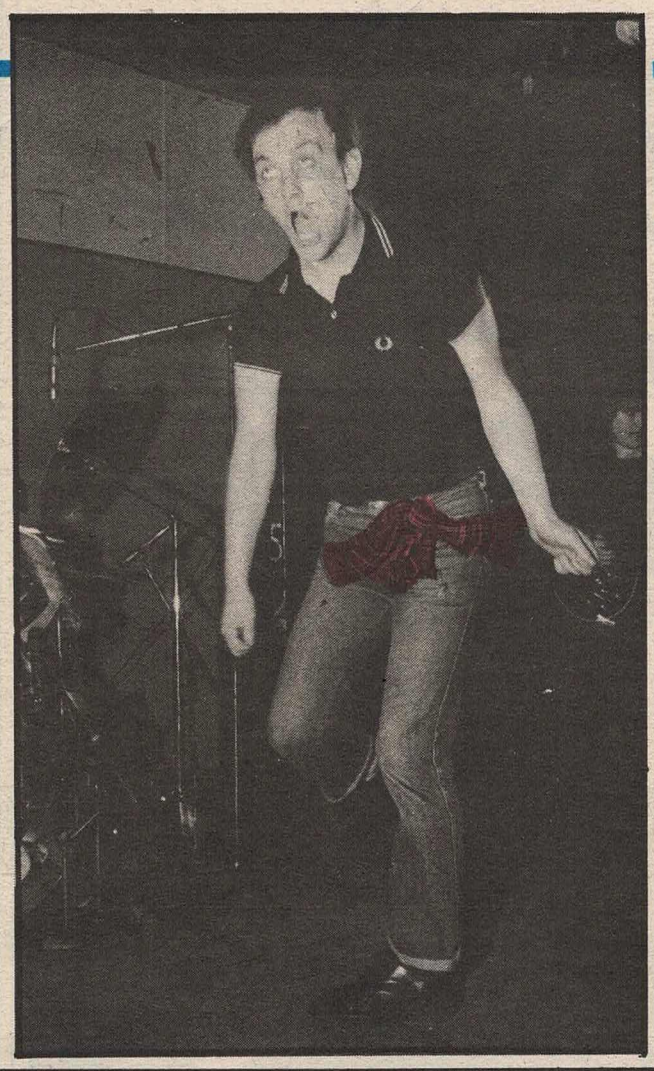
In fact, one of Red Beans' flaws is a relentlessness that tends to become wearing. A little variation in pace wouldn't come amiss; and I'd love to hear Brown tackle some of those great '60s soul ballads.

My other complaint echoes CSM's observation of a few months back that they "need a keyboard player, a second sax or a second guitar (preferably all three)". Exactly. The sound is too consistently raw, a little too reliant on pure ferocious *energy* to carry it through.

A few more instruments to play with and the occasional relaxed groove should see Red Beans And Rice as an exceptionally appetising prospect. The music they play may be dated in terms of style but the feelings and pleasures they coax from it are still among the premiere qualities to be found in popular music.

Graham Lock

Mensi the mouth. Pic Kevin Cummins.



Laverne Brown. Pic David Corio.

Nine Below Zero

Billy's

BILLY'S is looking up. It's currently washing its hands of a reputation somewhat sullied by its former promoter, "Svengali" Jock McDonald, a man much given to promises of PiL on stage eight nights a week, fast earning him the distrust of its clientele.

It lounges down the end of Dean Street, Soho, and has live music on Mondays and Tuesdays, making a good springboard for bands just edging onto the club circuit. Also, Billy's closes at 3am hence costly booze and trendy threads weave hand-in-hand through its slightly chintzy mirror-lined confines.

Come 12.30 on this freezing Wednesday morning, and a bunch of geezers in crumpled jackets and ties wheel through the doors, breaking stride with the kind of NY Dolls/Japan set who've been lending limp support to the evening's warm-up, Wasted Youth. They tell me they've had a couple of beers down the Old Kent Road where they've already seen one Nine Below Zero gig and sure as hell aren't going to pass up another.

There's method in this madness, Nine Below (as they call themselves) being a worthier cause than most.

Formerly Stan's Blues Band, they've been hacking vainly at the rock face for a couple of years now, only recently being recognised as anything but a good-time hard-grafting pub R&B band. A listen to their debut EP — 'Pack Fair Square', 'Rocket 88', 'Last Night' and 'Tore Down' — proves they've got a lot more to offer, a sparkling cross-section from skeletal slow blues to locomotive coasting R&B, played live in a studio and this avoiding the typically clinical sound that tends to plague a lot of studio R&B.

Another card up the sleeve is that, despite this self-styled R&B banner, they're much more of a straight *blues* band with a bass/drum, one guitar and mouth-harp unit that's custom-built to stake out all manner of 12-bars, hauling the solos across the coals while leaving just the right amount of breathing space beneath them. It's not so much the Feelgoods/Wilko/Inmates market they've got to contend with, as the ageing, but still vaguely spruce Paul Jones/McGuiness Flint combo, The Blues Band. *They* should worry!

Nine Below Zero give the impression they've been peeled off the back of a Bluesbreakers album cover; all drab shirts, collars, thin ties and square-cut crops — the whole early '60s white blues bierkeller outfit. You half-expect to see Peter Green in the wings.

Mark Feltham sets up a nice contrast, dressed all in black with a trim felt trilby propped over one eye as he's hunched over his harp, dragging out the most exhilarating barrage of sounds. Kenny Bradley's dependable, almost too restrained, on drums, and Pete Clark adds a sturdy no-frills bassline and seems to be the man behind the steering wheel.

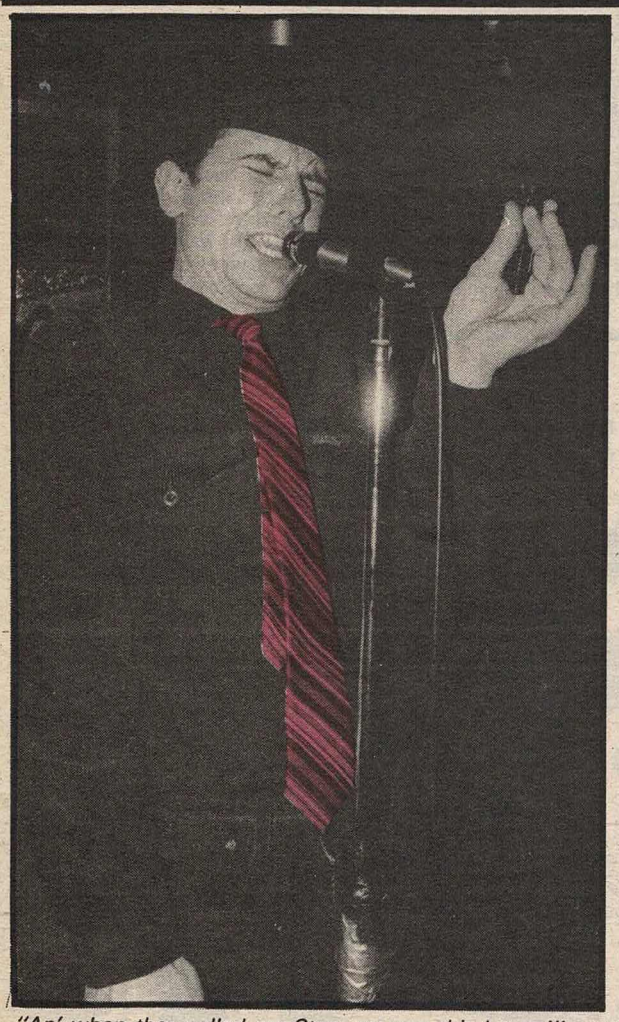
They strike an enviably mobile balance between the strict techniques of the Brit blues tradition and the sheer exuberance and roaring undercurrent of black Delta rhythm. Even Dennis Greaves' vocal has a typically American range of expression while still clinging to the purely *English* intonation of someone like Davy Graham. Most blues bands seem to swing either way but rarely get the best out of both.

The set's all solid gold, mostly made up of standards but Pete Clark's 'Tell Me Baby' — a forceful lilting blues dressed up as The Doors' 'Love Her Madly' — flaunts such an obvious song-writing potential that they'd be fools not to release some of their own stuff next time around.

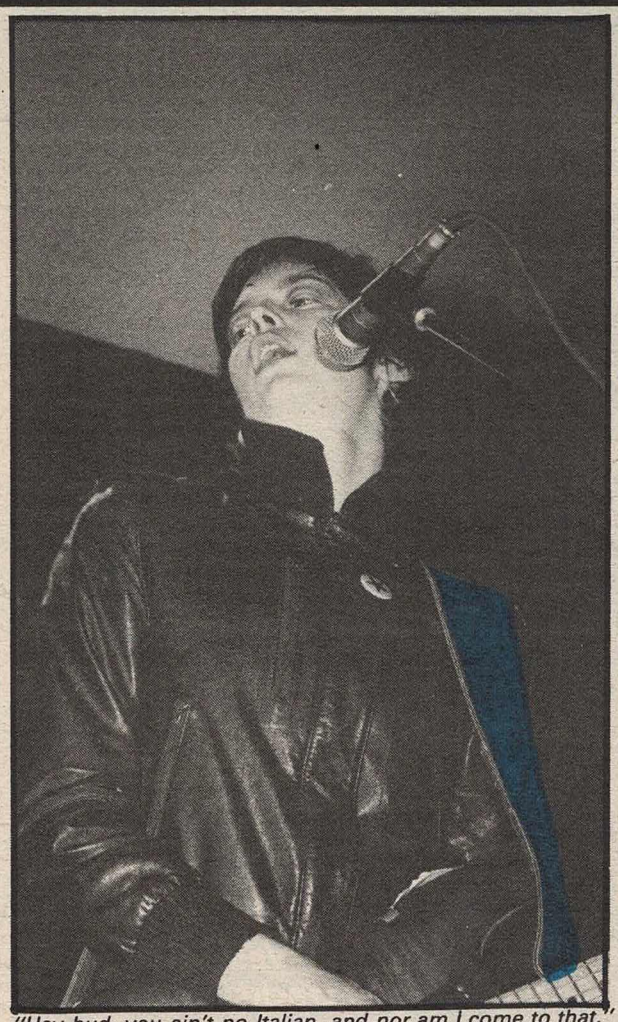
Opening with the old Charlie Parker number 'On The Spot Boogie' locked into Pete Chapman's 'Everyday I Get The Blues', their whittled-down discipline hits like a blast of fresh air after the glutinous ramblings of the support act. Robert Johnson's 'Talkin' Blues' takes up the reins, doubling time midway; Freddie King's 'Tore Down' keeps the pace cranked high — love the way they slice into the machine-gun rhythms — and they ease back up for 'Last Night', a risky shot at some slow, thinly-backed 'Stormy Monday' jazz chords that pays off in showcasing Greaves' surprising turn of phrase.

Enough said. See them and fill in the rest yourself. If there's any justice, the only comparison there'll be with The Inmates is an equally rapid change of status. Just watch.

Mark Ellen



"An' when they called me Stan, we was this beeeg!" says Zero's Dennis Greaves.



"Hey bud, you ain't no Italian, and nor am I come to that," says Holly. Both pix Santo Basone.

Holly And The Italians

101 Club

IT CAN'T be denied that Holly And The Italians are basic. Theirs is a sparse sound using just the rudiment components of guitar, bass and drums; straight rock with no fancy edges or special effects. And at first the audience are unsure. "After all," they could be thinking, "we are in a new decade."

A ragged beginning suggests another punk thrash outfit, but only for a moment or two, then the sound mellows and Chrissie Hynde and The Pretenders spring to mind.

It's Holly's voice, flat, crying, sounding more than a little pissed off with the whole no-deal — and yes, probably the American accent too (the band are from LA). But The Italians swirl around Holly's shoulders, whereas The Pretenders cling like fog to the ground around Chrissie's feet.

The thing that really gets their songs noticed is they have a hookline, like every good song should. Not clever-clever quirks, artificial special effects or carefully channelled feedback, just a simple catch in every song that proves effective bait.

The 101 Club is a strange place to play, or it is tonight. A mixed audience informal and relaxed and more club-goers than excitable, enthusiastic gig-goers, are reserved in their judgement and applause. They take time to consider, but the interest is definitely there, and about mid-set the majority warm to a rather cold, austere Holly.

And she is certainly the focal point, detached from the audience as she seems. She is totally enveloped in the music, always listening carefully as she counts in her two male counterparts on every number, in a low, confident voice.

But by mid-set she's rocking with 'Rock Against Romance', and she sings and looks as if she really means it. Their debut single on Oval Records, 'Tell That Girl To Shut Up', hammers the feeling home, full of nastiness and cynicism, jealousy in love: *"You better tell that girl to shut up/You better tell that girl I'm gonna beat her up,"* Holly spits convincingly.

Different again is a cover of a local Boston band The Real Kids song, 'All Kindsa Girls', their last number, a compulsive dancer which prompts the audience to demonstrate their appreciation and call for more.

All of which proves that providing you know the basics, and know them well, you can still achieve variety, style and distinctiveness. And Holly And The Italians proved one more thing, that it won't be necessary to be a computer during the '80s.

Deanne Pearson

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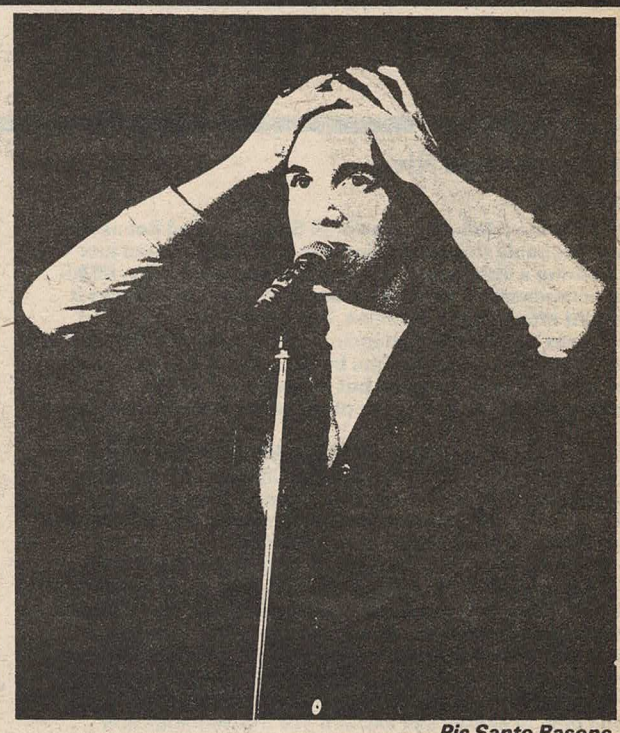


Pic Santo Basone

Stick It

Pointed Sticks

Dingwalls

"YOU'VE gotta like us, we're British colony," Nick Jones, vocalist with Pointed Sticks, Stiff's latest signing, ordered, stressing that they were Canadian and *not* American — as Stiff's vigorous publicity hype had done before the Sticks arrived in the UK.

One expects something special, or at least different, from an unknown band shipped 3,000 miles to play four headlining London gigs, but unfortunately they had nothing new to offer. They were just an MOR pop/rock band, lively but unadventurous, bouncing around in the same old ballpark, playing the same old games as numerous other pop/rock bands in this country; except they had a little more guts, pummelling their instruments aggressively and churning out numbers thick and fast.

Titanic drummer Dimwit, a huge, tattooed and crew cut ex-Marine type hammered his drumkit with such hardened fury that the kit collapsed at one point, leaving a heaving, sweating figure perched ridiculously on a tiny stool. No-one dared laugh. Yet as lost and clumsy as he looked without his kit around him, when he was playing he was obviously a natural, with an instinctive feel for drums and rhythm.

At the end of the set Dimwit lumbered to the front of the stage and proved that his voice was as strong and forceful as his drumming. Bawling out old R 'n' R numbers such as 'Splish Splash' and 'Tiger', throwing himself about the stage and seizing the pipes that criss-cross Dingwalls' ceiling, looking for all the world like King Kong, it seemed that he would bring the roof down at any minute.

With a drummer like this who needs bouncers?

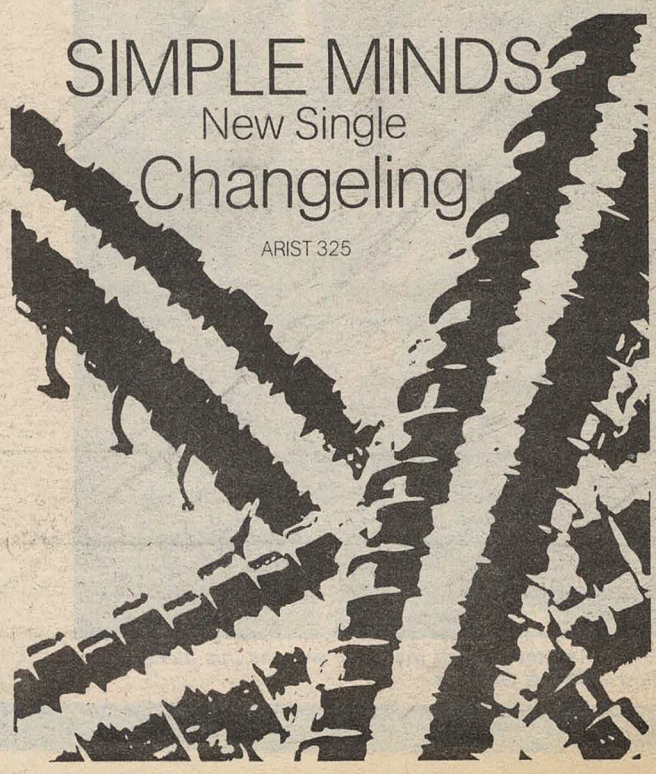
Of course he lacked the refinement of Jones' trebly warblings, which were more suited to Pointed Sticks' own material — a collection of mostly fast, racy pop songs for bopping and smiling to, with a light seasoning of rocking, but weak, R&B on some numbers.

There were a few loose hooklines — a challenging keyboard intro (from Gord Nichol) or a daring guitar line (Bill Napier-Hemy) here and there, but none really stuck or compensated for the overall mundanity. Lyrics were trite and simple, with lines, such as *'All that matters is you love me/And I love you'*, sounding as if they'd been lifted straight from Donny Osmond songs.

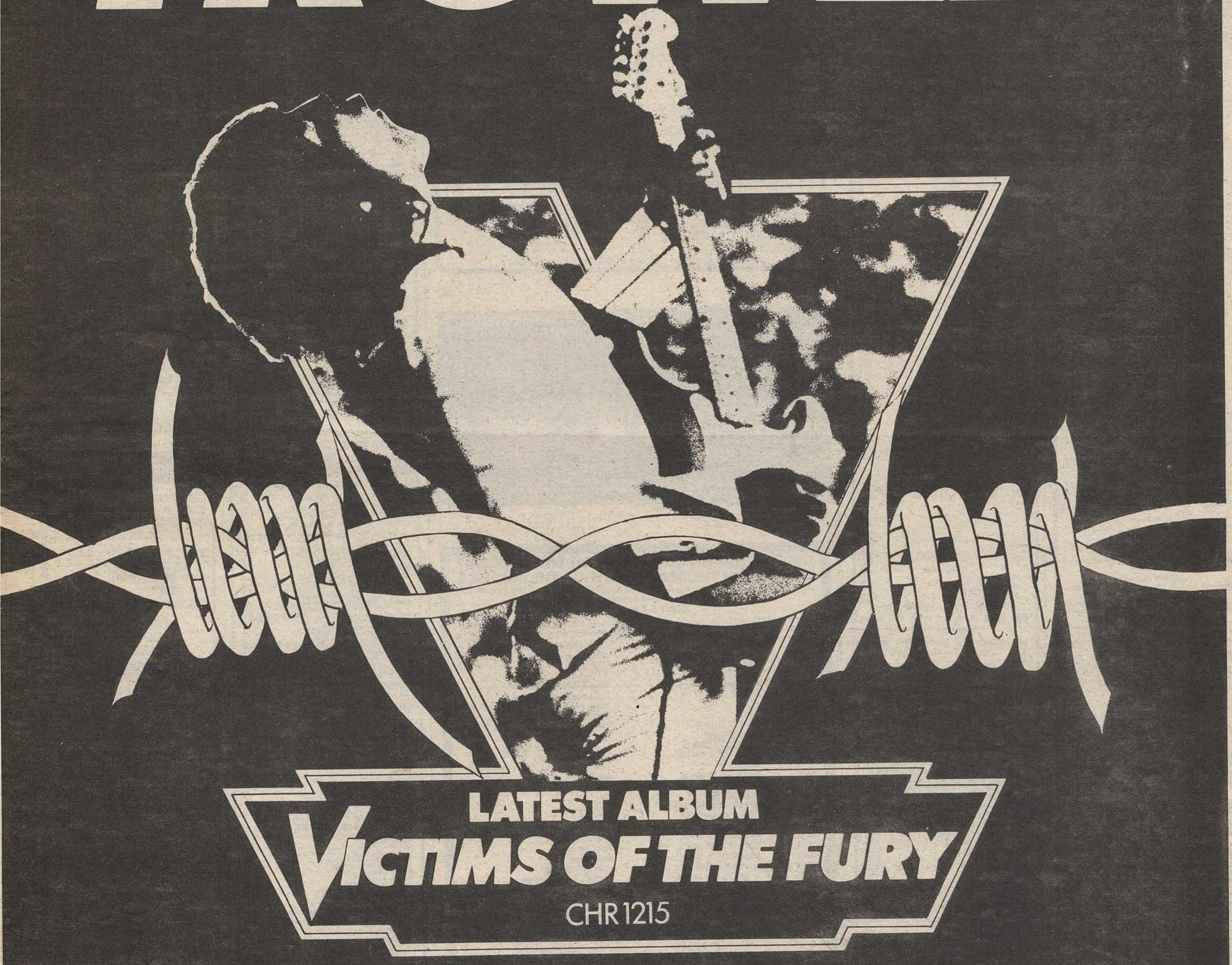
But Jones' singing style was modelled more on Joe Jackson's, only not very convincingly, as JJ would never be caught singing the majority of Pointed Sticks' material, let alone the toothy one's songs. However, on their single 'Out Of Luck' the similarities were particularly obvious.

Pointed Sticks fall somewhere between Racey and The Boys, exact location unknown, but destination obvious. They are aiming for the popular commercial market, here and in America, but their material is neither strong nor distinctive enough to make it in either country.

Deanne Pearson



ROBIN TROWER



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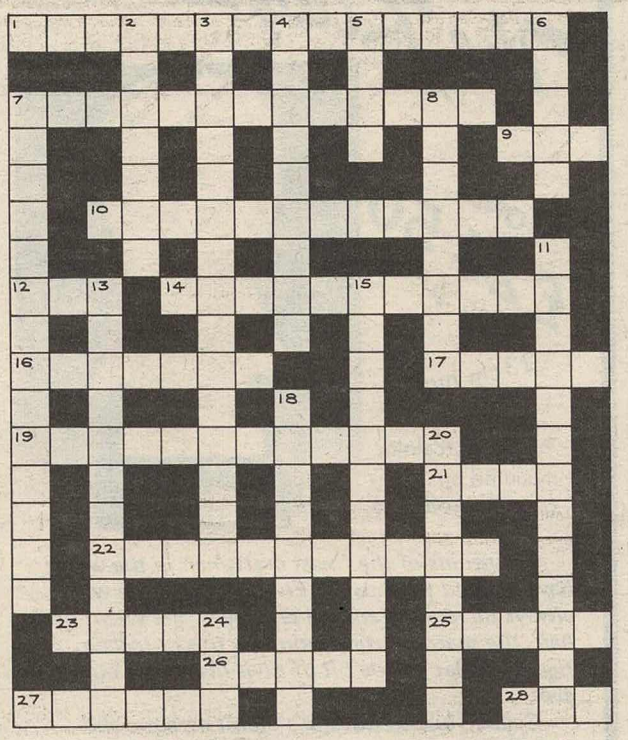


ACROSS

1 The real ale drinkers' Christmas hit; Elsie's not the only one who felt like a chunder! (3,4,2,6)
7 Bury-born singer/pianist whose debut hit was the lavishly-orchestrated 'You're A Lady' in 1972 (5,8)
9 See 28
10 Chic lard riff (anag. 2 words)
12 A bit of Peter Frampton will improve your hi fi! (Go on! — Ed)
14 Disrupt Iran's seance to find Ms Haslam a home!
16 The Brothers Disco (3, 4)
17 Verb. Loses contact with road surface etc.
19 The song that made Donovan a mid-'60s star (5,3,4)
21 Initially, *NME* Readers No 2 placed TV prog
22 Likeable aspects of E. Costello?!
23 See 6
25 Soul combo whose hits included 'Back Stabbers'
26 See 3
27 The Prefab Four
28 &9 'Ain't Gonna Bump No More (With No Big Fat Woman)' was his contribution to popular recording arts in 1977

DOWN

2 The brickies' fave Floyd elpee? (3,4)
3 &26 Hit from the album 'Im The Man' (3,9,3,5)
4 Siouxsie elpee (3,6)
5 Nelson or Wyman
6 &23 For Silver Screeners: Frog film director whose latest protegee is Texan blonde Cindy Pickett
7 Radio 1 'foreigner' (4,10)
8 Girls you'll find in any US war!
11 Generation X mini-hit titled after a '60s TV prog (5,6,2)
13 Pistols third single (6,6)
15 Venice skits (anag. 2 words)
18 Founder-member/lead singer of The Byrds who left after three albums through a fear of flying (4,5)
20 Aptly-titled Quo hit (4,4)
24 'Green Onions' backers

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1 Troggs; 3 Oval; 6 Desire; 9 Lovers Rock; 10 Matumbi; 11 I Can't Explain; 13 (Johnny) Cash; 15 Glen Matlock; 20 Love Is The Drug; 21 (Diamond) Dogs; 23 The Jam; 24 Doors; 25 Joe (South); 26 (George) Harrison; 28 Maggie Bell; 30 Leo Sayer.

DOWN: 1 Talking Heads; 2 Green Onions; 4 Vocal; 5 T Rex; 6 Diana (Ross); 7 (Joe) South; 8 Robin (Gibb); 10 Mick (Jones); 12 Poly Styrene; 14 Searchers; 16 Amen Corner; 17 (Leonard) Cohen; 18 Gig; 19 Diamond (Dogs); 22 George (Harrison); 26 (Terry) Hall; 27 Stay.

The Pain Killers

101 Club

DUNNO if they're always this way, but tonight The Pain Killers sound a lot like how I feel — rough. Whilst the whys and wherefores of my condition need not concern us here, those of the band must warrant some scrutiny, however unwelcome, if ever our subjects are to break ranks with the massed battalions which languish in deserved obscurity — simultaneously hopeful and hopeless.

Puzzled, I look on as their skinheadish guitarist dedicates his very Upstart-like '(I Wanna Be) A Traffic Statistic' to the poet Sylvia Plath, while the personable and pugilistic frontman of the group protests his own militant ignorance.

Mystified, I come away from the bar to catch them laughing and jumping off the stage, all the time performing 'Nice Legs, Shame About The Face'.

"They're from Norwich," explains a stranger in my ear.

"Ah yes, I see," I lie.

As it turns out The Pain Killers are at a crude and formative stage in their collective existence, products of an area whose rock-life has traditionally suffered from isolation and neglect. Whether time and experience will give the group some badly-needed cohesion and sense of common purpose must remain to be seen, but improvement there shall have to be; they're in a calling that's cruelly over-subscribed.

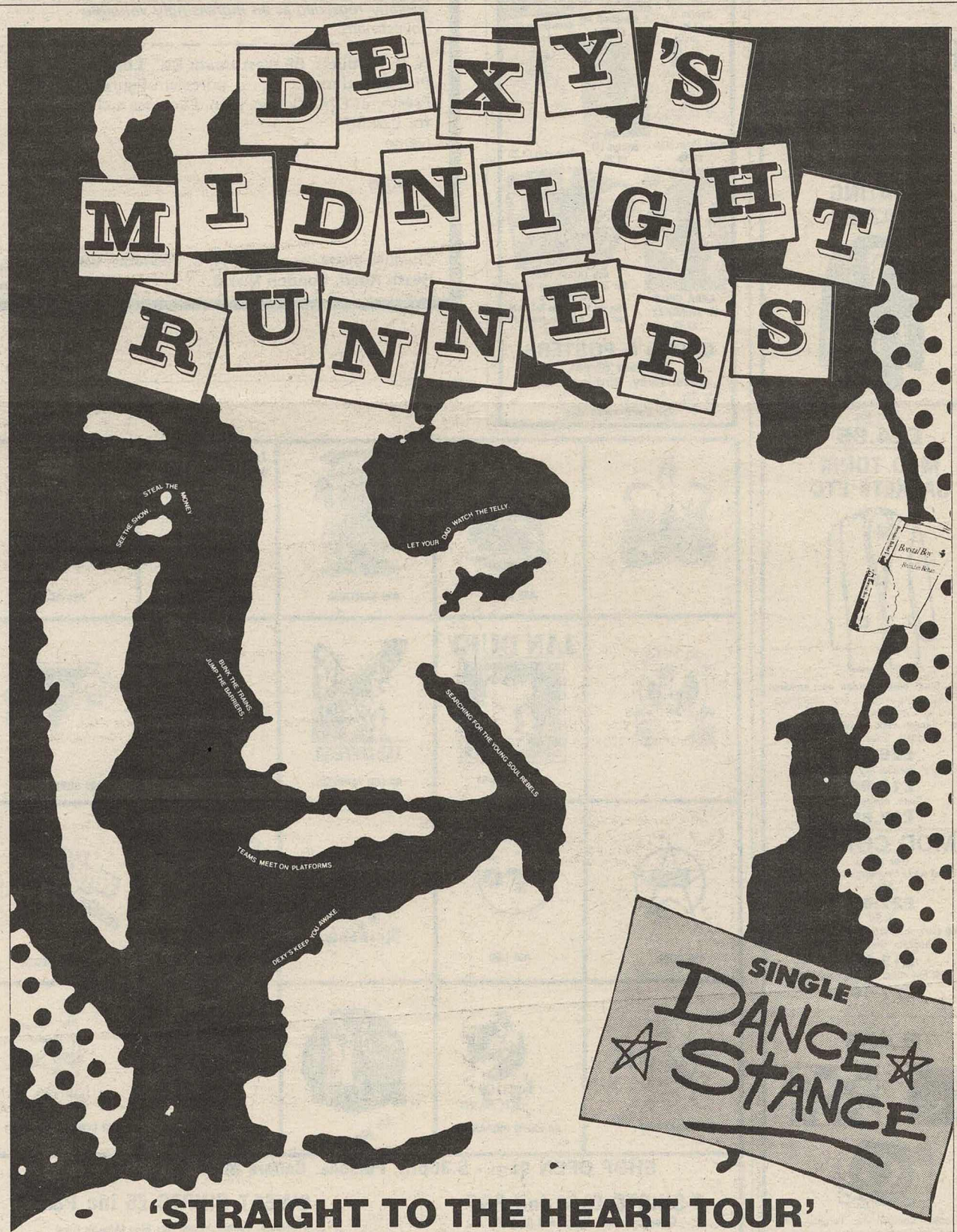
The Pain Killers number five (two guitars, bass, drums and a voice) with sporadic assistance from saxophone-playing Susy — who's a girl. Mostly they're about brash and hefty rock'n'roll, good humoured: a worthy weekend pub mob for the casual punter.

And they're a bit romantic, as well. 'Love's A Disease', despite the title, is a brave attempt to rescue the art of the ballad, long ago abandoned to MOR. The song doesn't really work at the moment though.

Their anthem, incidentally, is 'We Are The Pain Killers' and it goes *"We're the young generation/And we've got nothing to say"*.

This is possibly satirical, but also sadly true.

Paul Du Noyer



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29 PERTH City Hall
30 GLASGOW Technical College
31 ABERDEEN Fusion

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6 WOLVERHAMPTON Polytechnic
7 KENT University
8 NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE Polytechnic (Stafford site)
9 HUDDERSFIELD Polytechnic
10 NORWICH University of East Anglia
11 NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME Tiffany's
12 NUNEATON 77 Club
13 SHEFFIELD Polytechnic
14 WARWICK University
15 KIDDERMINSTER Town Hall
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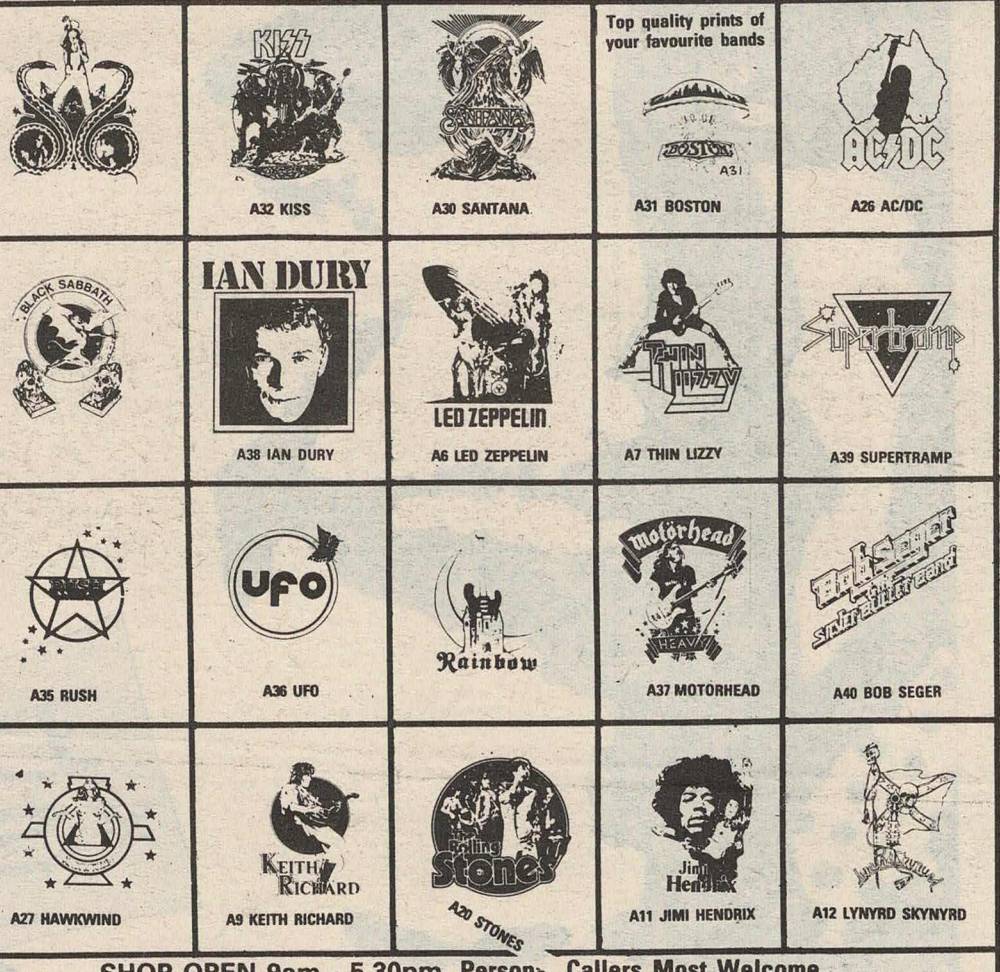

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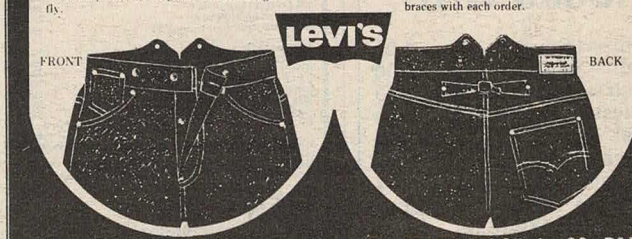

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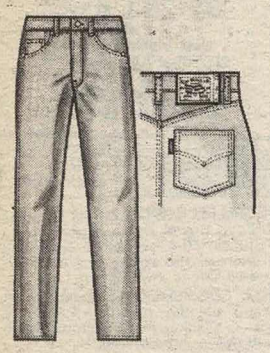

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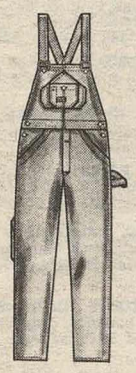

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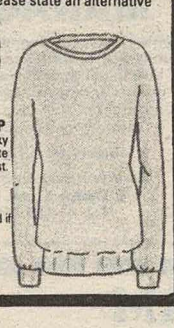

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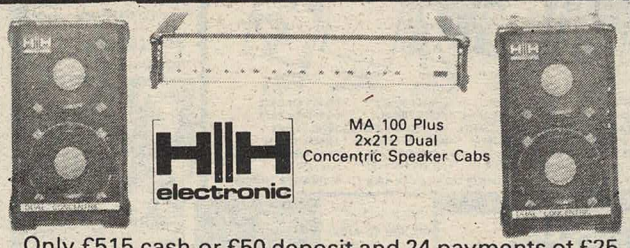

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MORE BRASS ON PAGE

From page 7

Chrissie has made a decision. "One thing I'm going to do on the up coming tour is make sure everybody has their own rooms, cos you do get on top of each other. The added expense I'll pay. When I go in, even in my own home, I don't like to listen to anything or switch on the TV. I'll just sit there. You can get really wound up if you're too close to someone. First thing in the morning if someone turns on the radio and you don't want to hear it I get in a really foul mood. I like to be left alone. So that's cool. Personal luxury is not my thing."

Didn't you set out to be the archetype pop star? Honeyman-Scott answers, "I tried to do that. That's why I stand as close as possible to Chrissie on stage."

Hynde doesn't bother answering. Would she feel comfortable if The Pretenders were obscure?

"I don't know. I don't think of it like that. You write songs, you sing, you play guitar. I'm going to do that whether I'm in this band or not. You just got to. It's 1980, you just got to . . . I don't know, it's not very much fun. I liked it when I was a hobo and I could get the night train and like, you know, just be free.

"I wanted to split a few weeks ago, I had a couple of days, and I couldn't go. It's not the same when you're travelling with a band, or anyone, or if you're travelling for a reason. It's not travelling, it's travel. It's not the same."

So what are you looking for in The Pretenders? Chrissie pauses. The phone rings. She pulls a face. Honeyman-Scott answers.

"Looking for? What is there to look for?"

Acclaim must have been what you wanted, but as it falls on you it strips all the things you hold sacred. Privacy, freedom . . .

Honeyman-Scott speaks a few words down the phone. Chrissie stares at the carpet. She sulks. "I don't want to talk about it," she says, hard faced and tight lipped, speaking softly and slowly.

She stirs her tea. Honeyman-Scott puts the phone down. There's silence. He walks back to his chair. "What's your problem?" he happily asks. "Where are you stuck? Where do you want some witticism?" The guitarist diplomatically attempts to cover the cracks.

"I think that our success has hit other people and affected them a damned sight more than it's affected us. We're still the same old moody bunch of bastards we ever were," he cuts away and exaggerates a comradely laugh. I don't respond. Chrissie stays vacant. "But everybody else is WOW! you're number one . . . and we're just kind of 'Yeah I guess we are.' Nothing's changed for us. Everything's still the same."

Chrissie gently recovers. "Well it's a bit naive to say that, really, when your whole life is like . . ."

"It hasn't come with the volcanic eruption I though it would," remarks Honeyman-Scott.

"It means we've had plenty of exposure," adds Chrissie.

Would you have preferred . . .

"No I wouldn't prefer anything," she snaps. "It's meaningless. Prefer what? It's just the situation . . . you make some sacrifices and that's it. I get the freedom to be in a band I really like, so you have to forfeit some other things, like your former lifestyle."

The guitarist rambles on about the '80s. Eventually Chrissie asks me if I get nervous interviewing. Well, I knew today wasn't going to be easy. You've played the journalist game my side, I feel a little daft going on about all these new pressures you're obviously aware of, trying to push aside your privacy and peep inside your past and projected future. Plus you always try hard to prove that nothing worries you and that you've got nothing to prove.

"Well, you've got my sympathy. It's not very easy to walk into someone's life . . ."

"Musical influences are always a good one," offers Honeyman-Scott who by now is lying on the sofa. "Any tracks off the album?"

Chrissie shakes her head. "Oh, no I'm not going to talk about any of them! I think maybe you got the impression that I was going to make it difficult. I want to be co-operative.

"I don't think I've got a lot of illusions about what's what in this business, and why we're where we are. We've got a lot of professionals working for us."

No inspiration to get written about as a nice, bright lady?

"Well, last time we had to do interviews, after they were all over, I just locked myself away and cried. When I read it I was just embarrassed by it all."

"From now on I want to be called Loretta and have babies," contributes the guitarist, who by now has all but slid away.

"We're working on some new stuff," continues Chrissie, "but because we're working on so called promotion we haven't really had as much time as I would like for rehearsals.

"That's my main priority, of course. Writing songs, and working on material and making sure that it's right. You can't ignore everything else. But it's not my job to sell records. I just want to take care of my end of it."

Do people think you're arrogant because you speak in a loud voice?

"Probably, and I'm drunk a lot of the time and I'm out of order a lot of the time and I'm too direct, very American. Americans are very hard to handle aren't they?"

THRILLS

TEA seems to soften Chrissie. She starts to relax and reveal a little about how she sees her predicament. My martinis have settled down. I begin to enjoy the sticky bourbon. Honeyman-Scott is merry.

Does Chrissie feel conscious of being a stranger in a strange land?

"It makes me feel bad in a lot of ways. I'm here and I'm finally staying here and I don't plan on moving back to the States. I love Britain. Y'know when I see other Americans I say like 'Get out of town, what right have you to be here? Don't mess up our fair city.' I feel all apologetic for being here sometimes. People make you feel that way. But I love it. I love it!

"I came here because I've always wanted to live here ever since I was a little girl. So I came. I think you can go and do anything you want so long as you've got a passport. 'Cos it's not going to last much longer anyway. So go, get out!

"I was saying to my flatmate last night that when anyone was in a situation they didn't like or had a problem, I would always walk in and say but there is always an alternative! And they would say 'no there's not, what's the alternative?' But I say 'Of course there is an alternative, for example you can leave everything now, you can give your car away, you can get rid of everything and just go. Just leave. That's the alternative in your situation,' I'd say.

"And I was sitting there last night talking to my flatmate trying to get him to convince me. I'm trying to convince him to cinvince me that we should both just piss off, sneak away, get the night train and go! But I can't now because I've really got commitments. I wouldn't get into a position where I had commitments and not fulfil them. I'd sooner just skate by and not have any commitments.

"I got by like that for 27 years, so I guess now I've got to be responsible and grow up." She slows down, murmuring in a lost voice, "I don't want to . . ."

Honeymoon-Scott stares into space and grins. "My mum said the guitar would be the death of me — this was when I was four and Hank Marvin was my hero. It would be the ruination of me, I should have something to fall back on. So I just get pissed and fall over."

Chrissie doesn't pay any attention. I ask her if she feels her approach is negative.

"No, it's not negative at all. I've always been this way. I'm not negative. I can't think of anything more in the world that I could get more out of than last night when we were running through this new song together."

Does she feel any thrill at reaching number one?

"Personally, no. I'm glad, everybody worked hard to promote the single and obviously someone out there likes it, but I'm too busy thinking about the song that we were going through last night to really worry about it. All I know is that I've got do *TOTP* today, mime the damn thing again, a song we've been doing for a year. I mean, can you imagine standing up there miming your own song? It's no ego boost or anything. It's just part of the job. It's quite fun.

"Last night my flatmate's going 'We've been chucked out and I've got nowhere to go', and I'm saying, 'You've got nowhere to go, you've got nowhere to live, your life's a shambles, but what am I going to wear tomorrow on *TOTP?* But you see, I feel guilty. I feel I shouldn't say, 'No, I don't care if it's number one or not?' If you're going to do something you want to make sure that you do it as well as you can, that it's as good as you could have done it . . . It's very rarely that I ever get satisfaction out of something that I've done.

"Like on 'Brass In Pocket' there's a couple of things I would change had we been able to put the mix back a couple of days, had I been able to listen to it a bit. So I'll never seem very positive about what we do.

"It's not *we* it's *me* . . . like I was saying about hearing myself on tape, hearing my voice. Like if I'm in a room and someone puts on a record, or I'm like in a public place and I'm grooving with some mates and getting a bit jolly and then suddenly our record comes on, I want to run and hide. I feel like I'm on display.

"My anonymity from my days when I was a hobo are over and that was like . . . that was the time when I really found happiness in my life. I could just go and do what I wanted to do and no-one would bother me, no-one would know where I was and I could go where I wanted and do what I liked. On a low budget ... you don't actually need much money. If you can wash dishes someone will let you stay at their gaff for the night. And then you start getting bogged down and people start giving you presents, and you start owning things and then you've got an obligation to take care of all these things.

"You can't throw everything in a suitcase, leave the rest by a dustbin, and piss off. Maybe that's what a lot of people want. People always say, 'aren't you delighted with your new success?' All the trappings of success that people are attracted to are the things that make me feel nervous, y'know? So it comes across as being very negative. But I'm probably not negative really. I mean, all words are lies. How do you define negative?"

Definitions can often be destructive.

"Right, that's why music is so good because it does deal with emotions and you can give an impression of something. You don't have to get very specific and you know it's the emotional content which . . . I don't think I can express myself very well, especially now, not any more I can't . . . It's probably easier to express yourself to someone you meet on the road hitchhiking.

"I'm not trying to make this sound romantic, like I am right out of a Jack Kerouac novel. I have no pretensions whatsoever to anything like that, but it's easier if you meet someone on the road and you start talking to them and you show them your canteen. It's an easier, more honest form of communication than if you meet someone on a plane and it's so and so's manager, and you know something about them and they know something about you.

"You get this pre-conceived idea, and of course I realise that the day will come . . that everyone will have pre-conceived ideas of me and I won't be a stranger anymore. This is what I really like, I always felt like I was and always enjoyed being."

So what drove you towards The Pretenders and the promises of even a small portion of fame?

"How can you ever know? Who knows? And you don't think about it. I don't think about what will happen. When you sit down and write a song you don't think 'Well maybe one day someone will cover this and I'll make a lot of money.' You write a song because you woke up at 4 in the morning, you got an idea, you turn the light on and you grab a guitar and start writing. You get lost in it, it's a personal work, it's self motivation. I don't think a songwriter has . . . I never imagined . . . you don't . . .

"You see, I can't talk. That's why I don't like interviews. I just keep rambling on.

"I never got involved in this so that there would be a reward. I can't help writing songs. I don't do it on purpose. I started writing songs when I was 14 and I didn't think that if I wrote a song I wouldn't have to go to class next day. You just do it. You can't help it. It's like someone drawing or whistling in the shower. It's spontaneous and if everybody wants to make a big deal out of it afterwards . . .

"For me to be able to bring in a song and have Jim (Honeyman-Scott) play on it is for me like an honour! Y'know, to have a song that has his sensitivity and talent on the guitar. He can do things with the guitar that I don't have the facility to do . . ."

"I said the same thing about you, if you don't mind," slurs the guitarist.

"I get a lot of pleasure out of performing a song." concludes Chrissie, "I think you get the picture . . . I wish we could have met on a bus, y'know."

The WEA publicist politely enters the room. My time is up.

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EDWARD BARKER

Illustration: Edward

If Gary Numan is so good at imitating Bowie that he fills Bowie's role to a T, how about David Bowie imitating Gary Numan so they both swop identities and then all this talk about Gary Numan imitating Bowie would be non-existent, with David Bowie in Gary Numan's role imitating Gary Numan in David Bowie's role who is really meant to be . . . something wrong somewhere.
C. B. Advisory Services.

The article on David Bowie by Charles Shaar Murray was rather perplexing.

I would agree that Bowie's an escapist, but is it from his own personality? He could be like D. H. Lawrence, vainly trying to find Utopia in different countries.

Bowie's personality was clearly defined by Nick Roeg in *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. Bowie's reaction to this and the fact that during the film's making he was made to sit down and shut up was akin to Rumplestiltskin's reaction when his name — his *identity* — is found out. Thus David Bowie's retreat to a Berlin flat for a whole year.

Does CSM know something about the Bowie of today that we don't? Since 1977, his interviews have only been about the Berlin albums which, with the exception of 'Low', have been totally impersonal. So the interviews at the time appeared intellectual, but now they seem shallow.

As for the '80s, perhaps I wrongly interpreted CSM's article, but he implies that many of Bowie's audience have gone over to Gary Numan. Come off it — Bowie has quite a mature and intelligent audience. Those who adore Numan — until he goes out of favour, which won't be too long — are all 12 to 16-year-olds.

And why worry about 'DJ' having to be flogged off cheaply? It was the worst song on the album.

So, what of Bowie in the '80s? I don't think he *will* lose himself. He says he wants to keep on contributing. However if he continues writing boring travelogues and doesn't come up with a more personal commitment within the next album or two, I'll eventually lose faith in him.
Calum R. Bennie, Falkirk.
What is it about the Lean Ascetic One that draws people like psycho-analysts to the couch-side? And anyway, Bowie's audience also initially consisted of immature 12- to 16-year-olds . . . — P.R.

I read an old *NME* the other day, to discover a nasty put down of The Jam by Paul Morley ("one who frowns at suits" but was beaten up for wearing one). "Theirs," he claimed, "is the plodding world. Look hard and see right through them. The Jam don't stretch imagination, they suffocate it. They can only get better." I looked at the date — it was a review of their Music Machine show (Dec '78). Now I didn't go, so I can't comment, but it does seem strange that in just about a year, Paul Morley can change his views so radically — now The Jam seem to be among his favourite groups. All this and Ian Penman being seduced by 'Message In A Bottle' and 'Walking On The Moon' after 'Roxanne' was just "papier macho" . . .
Jon, Harpenden.
Paul Morley has literally hundreds of favourite groups, but I don't think The Jam qualify. "Weller is a caged animal, half-heartedly rattling the bars, comfortably confined. If the cage doors burst open, I think Weller would prefer to stay where he is." Not post-modernist enough, methinks. — P.R.

Nothing naffin' annoys me more than some dummy from Woking spieling on about England not having any 'real ethnic music' like African drum music. Surprise, surprise . . . you really surprise me, Weller.

Popular you may be; informed you ain't. What could be more primal than 'mouth music' from the island of Barra or Irish drum music? Listen to the folk group down the local — they are echoing a very ancient sound. Even the up-dated 19th century ballads stem from very old oral tradition. Listen to old Cornish songs — groove to the rhythms of folk dancers from all over the country.

Drum music is tribal music — it needs no ethnologist to say this. We had tribes here way back when . . .
Disgruntled, Dyfed.
Can't we forget all this tribalism stuff? Don't you realise you're just causing unnecessary friction by trying to set up humble brotherly folkies as the new pariahs of teen-dom? — P.R.

I'm not a racist. I smoke French cigarettes, like Chinese food, buy Steel Pulse albums and talk to coloured people at bus stops.

I remember when I turned straight to *Gasbag* to laugh at the smart arse one-liners. I think you've alienated all racist readers of *NME* by now, so can I have me bag back?
A nostalgic Bag reader.
Not before we alienate all non-racist *Gasbag* readers too. — P.R.

Dear Anti Nazi, I am totally sick of reading your points of view every week on the National Front and British Movement. I think it is about time a representative of the BM spoke up and furthermore about time you printed a —
(Oh God, not another one — the Bag's even beginning to alienate me now. This debate is closed. — Ed.)

I work in one of C&A's staff canteens, and every lunchtime I have to switch on the piped muzak which is run off an eight-track machine. It just so happens that someone recently gave me an eight-track cartridge of Pink Floyd's 'Animals' which I readily donated to the rather limited stock of C&A staff canteen cassettes. So now once a week the staff have to eat to the sound of pigs grunting, dogs barking and sheep doing whatever sheep do. I'm sure there's a moral to be drawn from this.
A Farmyard Friend.
Obviously just another burp in the (dining) hall. — P.R.

I read with incredulity Monty Smith's reply to Alex Mackie's letter in your Jan 19 issue. At first I imagined this to be a perverse 'Spot The Deliberate Mistake', so uncharacteristic was it of *NME's* general 'liberal' policy. How can you measure any form of prejudice or inequality, whether it be based on colour, religion, sex or class, in terms of its social undesirability rating? So "sexism is something altogether more trivial" is it, Mr Smith? Your little faux pas reveals that for all your pretensions of liberality you are still a victim of the socialisation process of our male-dominated society. I await with anticipation to read what smart-arse reply you will use to wriggle out of this one.
Marie De Vere (a 'trivial' female type person), London E14.

If Monty Smith wasn't being funny (this is one devoted reader who still doesn't always get the funny bits) then how come after 20 million penetrating columns he can have missed the point about that overworked subject, sexism?

The point is, the big disadvantage about being an oppressed person is not just that you get your head kicked in, or that the ads offend you (cos we all know which is the more trivial of them). It's that all these contemptuous images of yourself creep back into your consciousness until you believe them and then you develop character traits such as passivity, lack of confidence, inferiority complexes and general humbleness, which inhibit your personality and natural bents. (Much more difficult to fix than a broken head, young Monty).

Blacks and women are supposed to have these humble traits. And, incidentally, black men might earn less than white men, but they earn *more* than white women.

Not that I believe any of it, being most unhumble meself.
Rude Girl of Barking.
You are Graham Lock and I claim my five pounds. — P.R.
We're with you on this one, Graham. — The sub-editors.

How come one week Lynn Hanna can come over all peculiar at the sight of Sting and say how wonderful it is to have a high female attendance at the Police gig, and next week slam Debbie H. for "lapping up the lust" and claim that the audience is "full of dirty old men who've only come to look"? It's "different for girls", I suppose. I suppose our Deb does play it up a bit more, but Sting's in the same game. Who'd want to *listen* to Blondie anyway?
Mike Thrimble, Cambridge.
P.S. I agree with Keef, Ted Nugent and Supertramp.
This is getting silly, not to say confusing. — PR.

Andy Gill, you're a wonderful human being who pretends to be a bigoted bastard. Monty Smith, you're a bigoted bastard who pretends to be a wonderful human being.
Till Enlenspiegel, Chorley, Lancashire.

Tell that Andy Gill fellow that although I appreciate the amount of work in his *Concise Printout* on synthesisers, as a keyboard player I cannot let him indulge his idiosyncratic, distorted bullshit about people of the calibre of Vangelis, Patrick Moraz and best of all Rick Wakeman. Calling them "pompous soloists" and "creators of masturbatory rococo bilge" does not entirely agree with my thoughts; especially as the whole *Printout* was supposed to be about masters of electronic music. You bastard, Mr Gill. These men worked terribly hard with their own hands and their own money to become thought of by millions as great inventors, innovators and creators of total relaxation and refinement in music.
Chris Hainstock, Lincoln.
No wonder the very mention of their names induces such a giant snore! I thought the bit about "masturbatory rococo bilge" was rather generous myself. — P. R.

For God's sake don't legalise cannabis cos then Led Zep will win the *NME* Poll next year.
Jesus Christ, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

It's too late to wipe the tapes — your precious street credibility is finally blown. Which prats were collecting wages when 'Bohemian Rhapsody' was single of the year?
A Punter in front of a derelict betting shop.
You seem to be under a misapprehension. Contrary to popular belief, the *readers* vote in the NME Poll, not us. — P.R.

Hello chaps, jolly decent of your readers to nominate me as the 10th best songwriter in your '79 Poll.

Now all I've got to do is convince Feargal, Billy, Mickey and Damian that this John O'Neill imposter can't write songs to save his life and I'm in the band. Triffic eh? I've got this songwriting bit well sussed, so clearoff will ya John? It's obvious that I'm smarter than U.

Listen, I've just had this great idea for a single called 'Johnny, Johnny'. What do you think, Feargal?
Jimmy O'Neill, Londonderry.
Another dropped bollock. Blame those sub-editors who seem so keen to stick their oar in. — P.R.

I demand a recount!
David Bowie, Berlin (near Lewisham).

The next time you get an assignment to interview Supertramp, please let me go, then I can tell the smug, paranoid bastards where to get off.
Richard Hoff, London.

Wats edukashun?
Love Daniel, age 6.
Serch me. — Roger Waters, age well into double figures.

After systematically condensing, digesting and assimilating all the relevant scientific, philosophical, metaphysical and parapsychological information that is now extant and available to me as the direct result of some two or three thousand years of hard experience on behalf of my fellow human beings, all I've got to say is: I'm not interested.
Bill Finlay, London WC1.

T-ZIERS INVADES AFGHANISTAN

MISERY, depression and imminent apocalypse. The Presidential campaign kicks off with **Jimmy Carter** in Iowa phoning up the local residents, there are grapefruits all over the northbound carriageway of the A1 in Durham and **Paul McCartney,** tousled, popular ex-**Beatle,** is still in jail in Tokyo. But look on the bright side — the Olympic Games are probably off and marijuana is still Columbia's biggest cash crop according to the *Sunday Times* colour supplement . . .

Talking of which, following the lukewarm audience reaction and less than favourable review of his Hammersmith Odeon gig in these very pages, Macca allegedly put his **Wings** crew into intensive rehearsal for their ill-starred Japanese jaunt . . .

Unbeknown to the **Ayatollah,** the wilfully obscure metal box merchants **PiL** were playing two wildly successful concerts at the Paris Palais last week. The band actually played for a whole hour and showcased new drum person **Michael Atkins** . . .

Meanwhile a brisk journey by sea and rail could have whisked the enterprising punter back to London in time for an **Elvis Costello and Attractions** gig in West London. The group were playing an invite-only warm-up for all those folk who entered the *NME* Elvis demo competition. For full details of how not to enter, see *Thrills* . . .

Ah, the power of the press and the tremors of conscience. **The Body Snatchers** have retrieved their 'missing' guitar and wish to thank everyone involved. However the band are not playing the advertised Mod extravaganza at Hastings pier this week due to the organisers' discriminatory policy of refusing entrance to people of the punk or skinhead persuasion . . .

XTC apparently set the house record in New York club Hurrahs recently *(Crumbs — Ed.)* and played host to such luminaries as **Gene Simmons,** sans make-up, the inseparable **Hunter Ronson** trio and **Talking Head Jerry Harrison** . . .

The return of **The Million Dollar Quartet?** Over Crimble **Johnny Cash** and assorted Rockpilers cut a version of **Basher Lowe's** 'Labour Of Love' track, 'Without Love' for future reference . . .

Squeeze, who seem to have been in Australia longer than is generally reckoned advisable, were forced to cancel some gigs recently due to band members suffering from sunburn. Softies . . .

Alex Chilton, Cramps producer and former **Big Star** leader, has a new disc available soonest called 'Like Flies On Sherbert' . . .

The scapegoat doctor who prescribed over 12,000 uppers and downers to Las Vegas entertainer **Elvis Presley** has also been found guilty of overprescribing drugs to **Jerry Lee Lewis. Dr Nichopoulos** was cleared of malpractice by the US Medical Board but banned from practising in his native Memphis for three months . . .

The Clash are preparing their third assault of the Americas for March with the cream of the 'Nobody no-wave' bands lined up for support. Prominent amongst these are **The B-Girls,** a female foursome from Toronto, and **Meat Ball Mama,** a middle-aged housewife from Red Hook, Brooklyn. This latter cookie gained recent notoriety when she attempted to assault the **Shah of Iran** in New York . . .

Afghanistani Angela Rippon: "What do you think of our country, Senator?" Visiting US big knob: "There's too many goddam miserable Russian bastards for my liking, missy." Well, thank God he's not in politics. It is, of course, the loveable American entertainer Meathead being interviewed by a well-known blonde pop singer in a hilarious scene from the forthcoming rock movie millstone The Roadie. Funnily enough, this is just one of many films not mentioned in this week's Rock'n'Role featurama (pages 21-25). Pic: Neal Preston.

Bebe Rundgren is still dating the loathesome **Stiv Bators** (a **Dead Boy**) and has landed a part in the next **James Bond** film for her pains (a remake of *Goldfinger?*) . . .

Sad but true. **Carl White,** 49, lead singer of the fabulous **Rivingtons** (early '60s group that hit with 'Papa-Oom-Mo-Mow' and 'The Bird Is The Word') has died in L.A. from acute tonsilitis. **Lux Interior's** (of **Cramps)** hero bit it because he refused to have the offending nodules removed . . .

Stiff's latest signings are both American: **Dirty Looks,** a three-piece from Staten Island, and **The Feelies.** Both have singles out within the year . . .

Lynn Goldsmith, NYC photographer, is keeping her lawyers busy, what with her previously *T-Zered* lawsuit against ex-beau **Bruce Springsteen** an all. Now Ms Goldsmith is suing **Peter Max,** the artist, for using a photograph of **Mick Jagger** as the source for the series of paintings without authorisation. Goldsmith is living up to her name too, she wants two million dollars. Bit extreme, what . . .

Ras Karbi and **Max Romeo** have penned the score for a Broadway production called *Reggae* (fascinating title) which is produced by **Michael** *Hair* **Butler.** Tis about a female rock star who returns to her native Jamaica and finds spiritual rebirth via 'Rasta' etc . . .

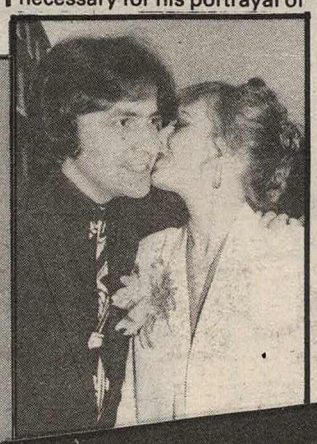
Mystic millionaires **Fleetwood Mac** are whipping up another LP in record time. Not so **The Grateful Dead,** whose newie 'Go To Heaven' was nixed by the band after they found fault with the finished product (and they made the bloody thing) . . .

Just as Virgin's grande fromage **Handsome Dick Branson** was returning from a fact-finding mission in China, it was learnt that the label have dropped **Culture** after an argument concerning production. **The Gladiators** meanwhile are in the studio with front liner **Eddie Grant** . . .

One-time **Roogalator Nick Plytas** is touting tapes of some demos he has recorded with **Danny Kustow, Paul Riley** and **Budgie** . . .

An unrecognisably podgy **Robert De Niro** — he weighs in now at 225 pounds — must carry on eating to top the bulk necessary for his portrayal of American boxer **Jake LaMotta.** But Bob won't be taking the verisimilitude all the way — he's refused to show his most private part for **Martin Scorsese** and a stuntman extra will impersonate the relevant limb . . .

T-Zers learns that **The Lambrettas** are to release **The Coasters'** 'Poison Ivy' on 2-Stroke, an off-shoot of Rocket Records. No big deal there — except that 2-Stroke's art department have been given strict instructions by the powers-that-be to copy exactly the 2-Tone artwork, incorporating the black and white backdrop, and even a cartoon shanker not dissimilar to **Walt Jabsco,** the 2-Tone man . . .



Neatly coiffured Danny Baker swept lissom Kelly Pike off her feet down Peckham registry office last Friday and seeing as how Dan's three kids by a previous marriage were with him (Surely shome mistake here? — W. Hickey) they thought they might as well tie the knot. Pic: Tom Sheehan.

What have we here? None other than Pete Townshend indulging in summat of a busman's holiday in sunny downtown Brighton with his recently acquired buddies The Clash. Pic: Chris Crashe

The **Kim Philby** club which opened for one night only and was destroyed after artist **Phil Diggle** action-painted the audience, will re-open on February 7 at the Osbourne in Manchester. Half-price entry if your clothes still bear the original flecks . . .

Ian Curtis, Joy Division chanteur, has produced a single by Blackpool's **Section 25,** not to be confused with **Sector 27** . . .

The **Louis Armstrong** Park in New Orleans (built to commemorate the musician born in that fair city) will open in April when the annual Jazz And Blues Heritage Festival starts. The park cost ten million dollars to build and is actually finished, although the local authorities refuse to open it yet . . .

Kiss In Attack Of The Phantoms, the **Kiss** movie slagged off unseen by *Thrills* some months ago, now a top-grossing Yankee B-flick . . .

It had to happen. Only ten years after its hey-day as the hippies emporium the Fillmore East is to re-open as a gay disco . . .

Which will presumably be of little interest to manly rhythm and blues combo **The Rolling Stones,** whose next LP is called 'Emotional Rescue' and features a cover picture of the band taken by a real laser (whee) with vocalist **Mick Jagger** sporting his now famous knee-length beard . . .

Back in Blighty meaningful thinking man's rock group **Gang Of Four** have parted company with manager **Rob Warr** due to, er, ideological differences of course. The fun loving fab Four will have a new single in the shops though before you can say 'dialectical materialism' . . .

A tale of woe. **Fritz Brenner,** guitarist with **The Nips,** went missing from a gigette last week when he was caught bunking his tube fare at Camden Town. Tsk tsk. Someone called **Larry** depped anyroad . . .

Although full details are not yet available it seems likely that **The Who** have signed a worldwide deal with Warner Brothers . . .

Trouble at Arista with **Oor Iggy?** The lithe one's intentions to maintain a European purity among his side-men has taken several tumbles of late, what with the departure of salaried **Glen Matlock** and **Brian James.** The Ig has reneged on his statement of independence — as witness 'New Values' — by including a **Bowie** song on 'Soldiers'. The title (cue ironic smirks and knowing nose-tapping) is 'Play It Safe' . . .

Chris Blackwell and some Island honchos seen at CBGB's checking out Long Island art-rockers **Bloodless Pharoahs** . . .

Dame Fortune smiles beneficently on **The Specials,** who will arrive in New York to be greeted by a press conference — such was the interest in the band that Chrysalis couldn't handle all the interview requests. The last rock act to hold a press conflab in The Big Maggot were **F. Mac** . . .

This thing could get bigger than both of us: **Geoff Travis** and **Mayo Thompson** are in America setting up a new division of Rough Trade. The label will eschew major distribution but plan some signings. **James 'Blood' Ulmer,** the jazz guitarist, and Cleveland's **Human Switchboard** are being considered for R. T. release . . .

What made Milwuakee famous made a loser out of **The New Barbarians.** The superstar band recently played a return date in the lite-beer state to atone for their last appalling showing when fans sensibly rioted. This time New Barbiturates played minus **Keef Richards** and **Ian McLagan.** In the interim CBS have dropped **Ron** 'I've Got My Own Demo Tapes To Peddle' **Wood** from their roster of rock characters . . .

And finally **The Jam** would like to thank all those who voted for them in the recent *NME* poll. Chuffed they were.

(That OK, lads? That's 22 albums you owe us at the new word-rate, right? Cheapo Cheapo closes at half six, so don't hang about . . .)

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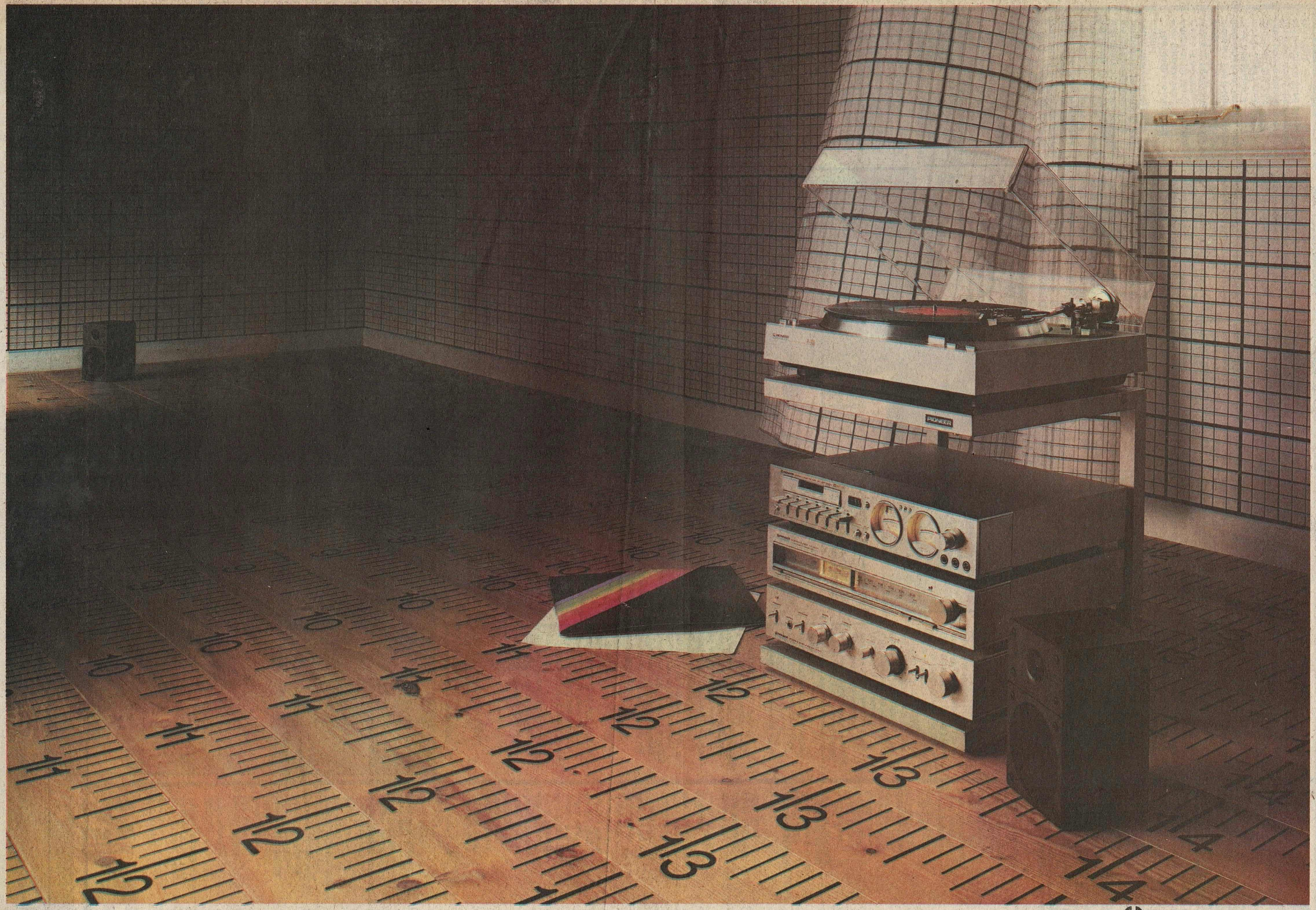

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